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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

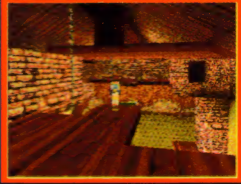
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NUMBER 93

APRIL, 1997
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OVER
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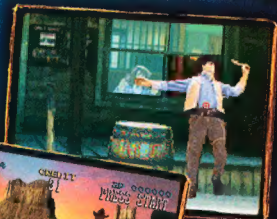




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INSERT COIN

By Ed Semrad

- New layoffs at Sega...
- Nintendo loses in Japan...
- Sony's growing too fast...
- EGM redesigns Review Crew and Tricks...

Sega has just announced that there has been another series of layoffs at the home of the hedgehog. This is the second such "leaning down" in less than one year, and this is leading to a whole new series of rumors about Sega's future. While anything can happen in the next few months, staff who still have jobs there appear optimistic about Sega staying in the video game business. And why not? Sales of the Saturn were strong last Christmas, as Sega finally found the hook (free games) that was needed to get gamers to buy the system. Now all Sega has to do is find a way to increase the number of games in their software library. With rapidly rising costs of producing games, many developers are looking at the PlayStation and PC as the safest way to invest their budget. Nabbing a few key games, like a Street Fighter III or MKIV as Saturn-only exclusives, would go a long way to show everybody that Sega is serious about staying in the hardware and software business in the United States. The bottom line is that it is still too premature to go and list your system and games in the want ads.

About Nintendo? According to the sales figures that they are talking about, it seems that Nintendo of America can do no wrong. About the only thing that is slowing them down is that they can't get enough quality software into the marketplace fast enough to keep their hardware sales moving. But that is America. In Japan it is just the opposite. Having lost both Square (Final Fantasy VII) and Enix (Dragon Quest 7) to Sony's PlayStation, coupled recently with a series of not-too-revolutionary software from their so-called elite group of third-party developers, the Nintendo 64 has quickly dropped out of favor with the Japanese game players. Nintendo has gone through droughts before, and they will surely spring back when StarFox comes out, but there is a much larger problem on the horizon. As previously mentioned, Nintendo is counting on the revolutionary 64DD disk drive to jump one step ahead of the CD-based game systems. Unfortunately, Nintendo miscalculated the speed at which 6X and 8X CD drives would drop in price, so now when they finally launch their DD, they could be up against a "new" PlayStation, fully backward compatible, that will equal if not exceed the disk access time and memory capacity of Nintendo's disks. And as games become more complex, feature more CG and require multiple CDs for



Ed gets the first crack at Tomb Raider 2 during his visit to the CORE offices.

each game, it will be very hard for Nintendo to win back the Squares and Enixes, let alone keep the developers they have. Couple that with a very high apparent cost for cartridge memory and Nintendo has some serious thinking to do before next Christmas. Already they are slashing game prices in Japan down to the \$60 and \$50 range, just to stay competitive with Sony's and Sega's CD games.

Finally there is Sony. The company that came from nowhere in a few short years became number one in the video game business. All isn't well though in PlayStation land. Losing key executives not once but several times is not helping Sony keep their focus on the game market. By not looking back over their shoulder, they let Nintendo get a foothold in the marketplace. If they want to stay number one, Sony will really have to work hard to slow the Nintendo 64's growth in the U.S.

Who's going to win? That's the beauty of this industry—no one knows! Analysts will make projections, editors will make seat-of-the-pants opinions. (Who me? Never!) And players will banter back and forth praising their system, its specs and game library. But again, with the proper marketing plan, enough financial backing and a killer exclusive new game line-up, any of the big three could wind up on top when the numbers come in at the end of the year.

In other news, if you haven't yet scanned through the magazine, check out our new Review Crew section and the revised Tricks section. One thing that has always bothered us here is the fact that there just wasn't enough room to fully review each game. After kicking around ideas, I think we have the ultimate solution. Our Tricks section is now tighter, and we can pack in even more tricks, tips and codes than ever before. In addition, we now have better paper quality and our screen shots are vastly improved. But this is only the beginning—wait til next month. By the way, have you found our April Fool's joke in this issue? Also, let me know what you like or dislike. Send me an e-mail. My address is 75052.1667@compuserve.com.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

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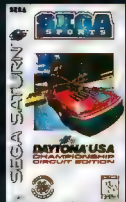
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Cover Art By: Matt Hall



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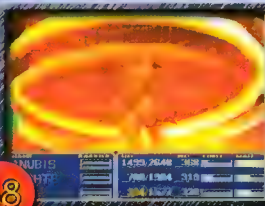
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THIS MONTH



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FINAL FANTASY VII IS NOW A REALITY!

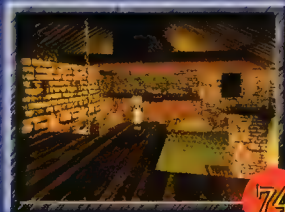
Straight from the shores of Japan, *EGM* has the first hands-on preview of the game everybody has been craving—Final Fantasy VII. We'll fill you in on the story line, characters and what the real game is all about. The story begins on page 68!

"Makou is a key element to the story line of FFVII."

CORE UNVEILS THE HOT SEQUEL TO TOMB RAIDER

The buff-and-beautiful Lara Croft is back in the sequel to Tomb Raider. We spoke with Core about what gamers can expect from Tomb Raider 2, which will be more gun-toting action! As well, check out their lineup of other intense games, like "Ninja" and "Fighting Force." The story begins on page 74!

"Callisto actually drowned when the Titanic sank..."



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BOON TALKS WITH EGM ABOUT MORTAL KOMBAT IV!

Ed Boon, half of the creative team of the MK series, chatted with *EGM* about Mortal Kombat IV, its hardware and why they went with a 3-D look. Plus, find out which characters will be in the fourth game! The story begins on page 82!

"When you get 3-D, all of a sudden you can look at characters in different angles..."

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BLAST CORPS

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DON'T

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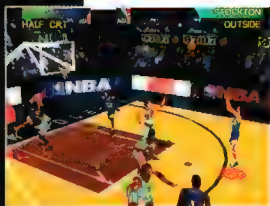
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THE BEST VIDEO GAME NEWS

PRESS
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UPDATE

BLACK PS UNITS
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Unfortunately, these sweet-looking systems won't be available in stores. Available only through Sony Computer Entertainment, the black PlayStation will be offered to those interested in joining Net Yaroze—a program that lets people develop PS games at home on their PC or Mac.

Aside from the scaled-down development tools that come with it, the system is unique because it can play Japanese, U.S. and European games (the latter requires a PAL-capable monitor). The cost to join Net Yaroze? \$750 U.S. ■



For more Net Yaroze info, visit this Internet site: <http://www.scea.sony.com/net>.

GO POWER
MERGER!A Sega/Bandai Team
Brings New Hope—
and Conflict—To The
Video Game Market

Two major players in the video game and toy industries have teamed up to create—if all goes well—the next interactive entertainment empire.

Sega Enterprises has announced a \$1 billion-plus stock swap to merge with Bandai, a company best known for the *Power Rangers*, *Ultraman* and the Pippin @World multimedia machine.

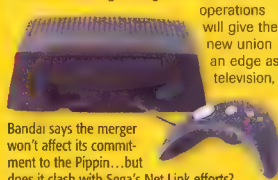
Barring any unforeseen glitches, the companies will merge Oct. 1, under the name Sega Bandai. It'll be based at Sega's offices in Tokyo.

The merger certainly aims to reverse the recent troubles plaguing both companies—the Saturn trails both PlayStation and Nintendo 64, while Bandai's @World has failed to catch on like wildfire.

Sega's foes in the video game market, Nintendo and Sony, took the merger news with indifference. One Nintendo Co. official, quoted by *Reuters*, said the merger posed "no worries" since Bandai and Sega's strengths currently lie in toys and arcade games, not the home game market. Sony Computer Entertainment did not release any statement in response to the merger.

Most analysts agree that the merger poses no immediate threat to Sony's or Nintendo's market share. However, they note the bonding of Sega's and Bandai's

operations will give the new union an edge as television,



Bandai says the merger won't affect its commitment to the Pippin...but does it dash with Sega's Net Link efforts?



One of the world's best-known video game mascots (Sonic) will join forces with one of the world's most popular toys (the Power Rangers).

EGM
Photo
Illustration
(This is not
a real toy
you'd find)

Internet and video game technologies begin to converge.

For video gamers, the merger raises intriguing questions over the future of Bandai operations that surely conflict with Sega's plans. Most notably, Bandai is a third-party publisher of PS games (see the ZX-E-D story in *EGM* issue #92's Press Start for one example). The most recent word from Bandai is that it has no plans to stop PS game publishing—after all, it makes no sense to dump a profitable business.

One product with a far murkier future is Bandai's Pippin @World player, since it does compete somewhat with the Saturn's Net Link Web browser. Again, Bandai has said it will support the machine, despite reports that its inventor, Apple Computer, may stop active development for it. ■

The Making of an Interactive Entertainment

Both companies bring a variety of operations under one roof. Some key elements include:

- **Arcade Expertise:** With games such as *Virtua Fighter 3* and entertainment centers worldwide, Sega knows how to run arcades.
- **Software Development:** Saturn and PC.
- **A Strong Software Distribution System.**
- **Sega Channel:** It has already forged strong links with major cable TV companies.
- **Key Licenses:** Not only does Bandai have popular franchises in Japan, but it knows how to sell toys featuring those franchises.
- **Software Development:** Pippin and PS. Again, most games are based on licenses.
- **Digital Entertainment:** The Pippin @World placed Bandai in the TV/Internet market.



NTSC U/C

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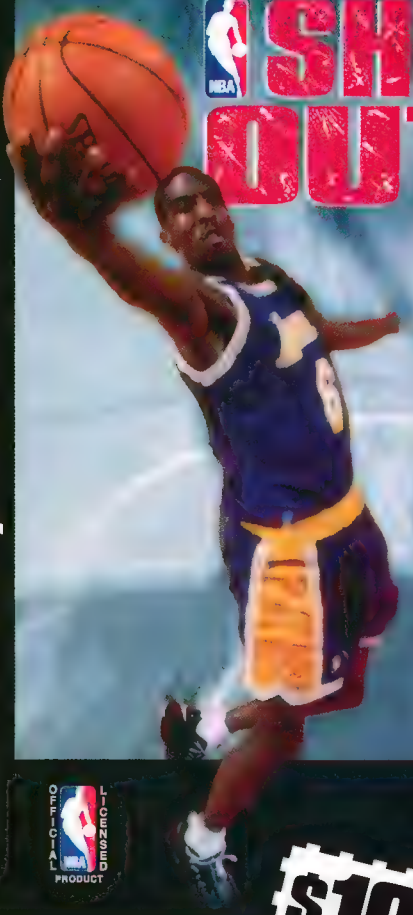
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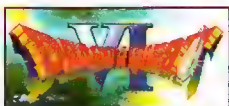
NINTEN-D'OH!

Despite Stellar Holidays, N64 Loses Key RPG

While posting record sales in the United States at the end of 1996, Nintendo suffered a tough blow when N64 developer Enix announced that the next game in its Dragon Quest series, DQ VII, will be a PlayStation exclusive to arrive by 1999.

Nintendo Co. President Hiroshi Yamauchi downplayed the loss of the series (and quite possibly, its 2 million or so followers in Japan); after all, Enix still remains an N64 game maker. However, N64 has not fared well in Japan without a killer RPG to pit against the PS' offerings, including Square's Final Fantasy VII (another top RPG that had been expected for the N64).

According to overseas reports, Enix decided to bring DQ VII to the PS for purely economic reasons: It offered the largest market, and the



This title may have belonged to the Super NES, but it's the PlayStation that will reap the benefits of its sequel.

CD format meant it would be cheaper to mass-produce games.

Along with Square, Enix also noted the appeal of the CD format from a development standpoint: It doesn't have memory limitations like N64 cartridges do.

As a response to complaints over high N64 cartridge prices, Nintendo plans to drop prices on upcoming games in Japan. For example, Blast Dozer (Blast Corps in the U.S.) will sell for roughly \$70 U.S.—well below the standard \$100 U.S. tag. Nintendo hopes to boost sales of other games like StarFox 64, by offering free accessories such as the Force Pak. ■

UPDATE

EGM GETS PAWS ON ANALOG PS PAD

EGM's editors are among the first gamers in the United States to grip the eagerly awaited dual-analog PlayStation controllers from Sony Computer Entertainment. First thoughts? Two thumbs on, er, up.

As stated in an earlier EGM news story, the pads are roughly the same size (and heft) as the regular controller. The only changes: the two analog sticks; a digital/analog switch; larger, curved L2 and R2 buttons and the force feedback function (it makes the pad vibrate).

At SCE's product development offices, one editor played a simple 3-D pong demo to test its control. The analog sticks are surprisingly responsive; a little nudge is all that's needed to record movement.



The L2 and R2 buttons (not shown) on this pad are bigger—thus easier to find by touch.

The joysticks, which look like short mushrooms, felt like a hybrid between Sega's analog thumb pad and Nintendo's longer analog stick—a nice combination.

Other EGM editors tested the pad at several developers, which had received their own pads to incorporate analog control into their games in progress.

While SCE has not officially announced a release date, multiple sources said it would come out by the end of August. ■

The PlayStation memory card storage limit has been broken yet again: In Japan, one company has released a 480-block memory card (above). That's equal to 32 standard cards. The card has an LED that shows what part of the card is being accessed. No word yet whether any company will sell a similar card here in the United States.

GT Interactive Gets Busy: It was only a matter of time before GT took its 3-D games to a 64-bit console like the **Nintendo 64**. GT plans to roll out three N64 titles this year; the first is **Raven** and **Id**.

Software's **Hexen**, due by July. The others are **Duke Nuke** in 3D and **Unreal**, a **GT** rep said.

Out of all the pictures taken from **Control Park Media's** new video, **Battle Arena Toshinden** (based on the video game), we had to pick the shot of **Tracy** (below) showing off her ultrasassy outfit. Shame on us! Anyway, the video's in stores now for \$19.98.



Top Comedian Gets Hidden in Capcom's New Fighter

Capcom's new fighter, **Darkstalkers: The Night Warriors**, is a sequel to the 1994 game **Darkstalkers: The Vampire Soldiers**. The game features a cast of vampire-like characters, including **Blaze**, **Devil**, and **Tron**. The game is available on the PlayStation and Super Nintendo Entertainment System. The game is a 2D fighting game with a focus on fast-paced action and special moves. The game is a sequel to the 1994 game **Darkstalkers: The Vampire Soldiers**. The game features a cast of vampire-like characters, including **Blaze**, **Devil**, and **Tron**. The game is available on the PlayStation and Super Nintendo Entertainment System. The game is a 2D fighting game with a focus on fast-paced action and special moves.



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Ever feel like driving a Porsche®? Want to? The Alps Gamepad for the Playstation™ game console offers you the power, performance, and handling you've been waiting for in a sleek, high-tech, finely-tuned and tested controller designed by professional game players to meet the demanding needs of today's gamers.



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Ultra-smooth Dpad lets you concentrate on your game, not a throbbing thumb.

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PERFORMANCE

NEW 3-D SEEKS LINK TO VIDEO GAME USE

This contains a series of stories that highlight emerging technologies and their possible effects on video gaming's future

The prevailing complaint about current visual 3-D displays is eye strain—and the headaches that often ensue—which makes 3-D difficult to view for extended periods of time or from certain angles.

However, one firm has found a way to solve those problems. By using a special screen overlay that "floats" 2-D images on multiple layers, users can watch in 3-D without straining eyes, and without needing headsets or glasses.



A breakthrough Company

"The Floating Image System is a very impressive technological offering that could be a very practical and economical method for 3-D imaging," said Hisao Oguchi, general manager of Sega's AM3 arcade game development team.

Indeed, arcade and home video games may be the first fields to take advantage of this technology from Floating Images.

Basically, all that's needed is the special reflector screen that fits over a TV or monitor. Because these layered images run independently of each other, they can create special effects such as true parallax scrolling or focus shifts from foreground to background.

Aside from the screens' rather inexpensive cost (possibly as low as \$80 per TV monitor), the display can be viewed at any angle without image degradation—another plus over current 3-D methods.

Currently, Floating Images is seeking out companies interested in exploiting this 3-D technology, including at least one PlayStation game developer. ■

Are you a Mortal Kombat junkie? If so you might want to check out some new **PolyGram** videos—both episodes from USA Network's successful cartoon series. Each 30-minute video costs \$9.95.

Bruce Willis is making the leap once again from the silver screen to the computer screen. **Activision** has inked a multimillion-dollar deal to put Willis' likeness into *Apocalypse*, a futuristic arcade-style action shooter. In the game, Willis will play a sidekick who tags along with the player as a fighting compadre. To pull off the feat, **Activision** will employ "revolutionary cyber-scanning and motion-capture techniques" to create a 3-D model of Willis.

The developer of *VMX Racing*, **studio a**, has filed a lawsuit against two ex-employees and their current employer, **T.H.Q.** The lawsuit claims that the former employees allegedly reneged on a deal to finish *VMX Racing* (thus delaying its release), and used **studio a**'s equipment to begin a new company called **Inland Productions**, which had made a WCW wrestling game for **T.H.Q.** A **T.H.Q.** rep said the company denies any wrongdoing in its work with Inland.

REVIEW



IT'S GUNZ OF FUN!

There seems to more light guns than gun games out for the PlayStation right now.

ACT Labs' model, dubbed the Gunz, is one of the better quality ones out there—not necessarily for its features, but since it has virtually no compatibility problems compared to other guns.

EGM tested it with Konami's *Crypt Killer*, and not once did the auto reload fail to work (the auto reload comes in five-, 10- and 15-round bursts). Otherwise, the lightweight gun offers the standard set of features (the special weapon button is placed at the back). There's also a Saturn model. ■

Gunz (PS)

\$29.99 (msrp) • Available now

Pluses:

- + easy auto-reload switch
- + no compatibility problems

Minuses:

- no autofire/rapid fire feature
- no dual-system plug

BY THE NUMBERS

NINTENDO BOOSTS N64 PRODUCTION

Whatever Nintendo's situation in Japan...

...the wildcat in the United States...

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PREVIEW

NAKI CUTS ALL CORDS WITH WIRELESS PS PAD

Naki has just brought out a new style of its popular wireless PlayStation controller that works up to 30 feet away from the system.

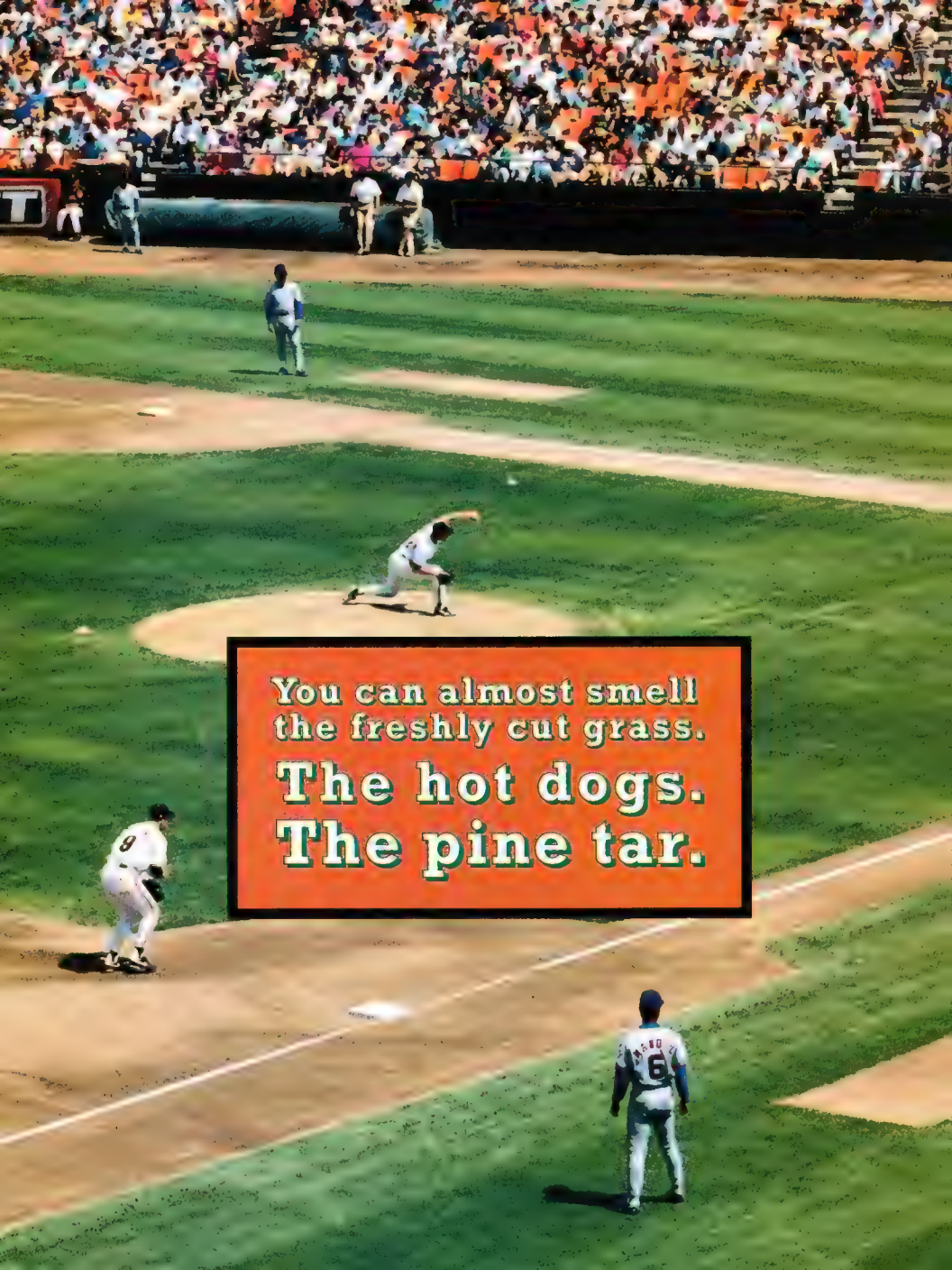
An infrared receiver that plugs into the PS controller ports can be used by either one or two of these wireless pads.

In addition to its slow-motion and turbo fire features, the pad also offers automatic shut-off to conserve battery use.



With just two AAA batteries, the pad runs for 40 hours.

Another smart idea is the raised D-pad similar to the one used on the Sega Genesis. ■



You can almost smell
the freshly cut grass.

The hot dogs.
The pine tar.



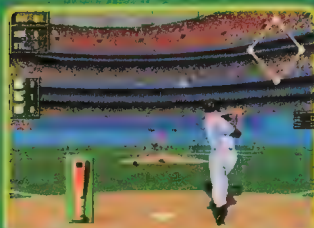
Exclusive **Pitching Meter** lets you control your arm and release like an ace pitcher. Read the Pitching Meter and keep it steady to throw a perfect fastball.



Exclusive **Batting Meter** lets you keep your eye on the ball and control the power to your swing. Everything is done by feel. The sweet spot was just one click away.



Exclusive **3-D Environment** and **Real-time Camera** take you the action from field level to all stadium stadiums. Accelerated animation gives you smoother, faster graphics for the most realistic baseball action.



Exclusive **Artificial Intelligence** controls the 250+ players and prospects with the same old play like the pros. Control on every play. Includes 250+ players and prospects. And they don't come to you.



"...unprecedented control."

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

**The most realistic
gameplay ever.**



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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY'S

REVIEW CREW

TOP 10 PICKS OF THE MONTH

MARCH 1997

OVERALL

1	20	Mario Kart⁶⁴	9.3	Nintendo
2	3	SF Alpha 2	9.1	Capcom
3	4	Tomb Raider	9.1	Eidos
4	1	Vandal Hearts	8.6	Konami
5	6	Tetris Attack	8.3	Nintendo
6	7	Buster Bros. Col.	8.3	Capcom
7	8	MechWarrior 2	8.1	Activision
8	5	Soul Blade	8.3	Namco
9	11	Twisted Metal 2	8.3	SCEA
10	7	Tekken 2	8.5	Namco
11	3	Dragon Force	9.0	Working Designs
12	1	GameDay '97	9.5	SCEA
13	1	NBA Shoot Out	9.0	SCEA
14	1	Die Hard Arcade	7.4	Sega
15	1	NBA Hang Time	7.8	Midway
16	9	Command & Conquer	8.9	Westwood Studios
17	10	Suikoden	8.8	Konami
18	12	Shadows O.T.E.	8.3	Nintendo
19	14	Wave Race⁶⁴	9.0	Nintendo
20	18	Turok: D.Hunter	6.9	Acclaim

PLAYSTATION

1	1	Tomb Raider	9.1	Eidos
2	1	Vandal Hearts	8.6	Konami
3	1	Buster Bros. Collection	8.3	Capcom
4	1	MechWarrior 2	8.1	Activision
5	2	Soul Blade	8.3	Namco
6	5	Twisted Metal 2	8.3	SCEA
7	3	Tekken 2	8.5	Namco
8	1	GameDay '97	9.5	SCEA
9	1	NBA Shoot Out '97	9.0	SCEA
10	4	Suikoden	8.8	Konami

SATURN

1	2	SF Alpha 2	9.1	Capcom
2	1	Dragon Force	9.0	Working Designs
3	1	Die Hard Arcade	7.4	Sega
4	3	Command & Conquer	8.9	Westwood Studios
5	7	S. Puzzle Fighter 2	7.4	Capcom
6	5	Virtua Cop 2	8.1	Sega
7	10	Virtual On	7.9	Sega
8	1	DecAthlete	8.3	Sega
9	4	Norse by Norsewest	7.4	Interplay
10	6	Dark Savior	8.4	Sega

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

2	20	Name of Game	9.1	
		Publisher's Name		
		Average Review Crew Score		
		# Consecutive Months On The Chart		
		Last Month's Rank		
		Rank Number		
		Game System		

The editors of *EGM* have put together a listing of the best games for the most popular systems. Our Review Crew has done the ratings, and they have been averaged into one easy-to-read score. It is also important to note that sometimes a game will get ranked higher than others with larger Review Crew scores. This is because the game is "hot," and it is one which our Review Crew is constantly playing. These lists will change every month as new games are reviewed.

The games are ranked by individual system, and there is an overall top 20 list for all the systems. This last list will pick up any hot 18-Bit or cartridge game that may come out.

On the right-hand page, we have put together a list of all of the games that will be coming out in the next three months for the three major game systems. This list should be helpful for players, so that they can plan out their future game purchases. The game name and the month the title will be released was obtained from each of the game companies and is correct as of the date of the month listed on the previous page. Please note that the release date could change due to company decisions.

NINTENDO⁶⁴

1	1	Mario Kart⁶⁴	9.3	Nintendo
2	1	NBA Hang Time	7.8	Midway
3	1	Shadows O.T. Empire	7.9	Nintendo
4	1	Wave Race⁶⁴	9.3	Nintendo
5	1	Turok: D.Hunter	6.9	Nintendo
6	2	Super Mario⁶⁴	9.5	Nintendo
7	6	MK Trilogy	8.1	Midway
8	7	Gretzky Hockey	8.3	Midway

THE

SUSHI-X FILES

No. 1

Odds&Ends

Sushi-X's notes from the video gaming underground

In the past months, the *EGM* staff and I have been trying to figure out a way to thank you (yes, you) for subscribing. It came down to revealing my true identity (so you'll know when I whup you in *SFIII* at the arcades), or offering a free bonus.

Well, my identity is the most closely guarded secret at *EGM*, so forget the first option. Rather, what you hold in your hands is the first edition of the Sushi-X Files: a tear-out section given only to loyal subscribers like yourself.

Like before, the Files will feature top moves and strategies for my favorite video games like *SFIII*. (It seems more like *SFIV* with all those dangling story lines for the missing *SFII* cast. What's up Capcom?)

This time, however, the *EGM* staff and I are adding more. Lots of weird video game stories and tidbits crop up at our HQ; confidential stuff we normally don't get to talk to you about.

Plus, the Files gives us an outlet for our twisted video game humor, and also info on related topics: toys, videos, fanzines and odd game secrets. No topic is too sacred for us to touch!

I hope you enjoy this inaugural edition; send me a line and let me know what you think.

Sushi-X

A guide to the weird, offbeat stuff *EGM* couldn't print...until now!

EYE SPY!

The eye-catching intro to *Soul Blade* for the PlayStation is truly a treat.



not only because of the top-notch animation, but also a chance to catch Sophia (above) in her birthday suit. (Don't feel left out female readers; you can catch Rock wearing nothing but woolly briefs, too!) Well, *EGM*'s surveillance team has found an odd difference in the U.S. version of *Soul Blade*, and Japanese counterpart, *Soul Edge*.

In the intro, there's another scene which Sophia's skinny-dipping in a lake—with a strategically placed hand in the Japanese version (below left). In the U.S. version, she's got a white bathing suit on instead (below right).



Can you explain why Namco made such a change? We think that some... seeing a conspiracy to...

It's An Ad, Ad World

TALK IS CHEAP

Some companies will say anything to sell their video game products. Just check out this list of eye-catching, head-scratching ad phrases recently seen in *EGM*. Just remember, these were in ads for video games:

■ "The stealthy samurai can carve you a new orifice in seconds flat."—an ad for *Tekken 2*. Hey, that wasn't on the moves list...

■ "Size: 8 inches from nose to butt."—an ad for Konami's *Justifier* light gun. What did you think?

■ "Hit the court and kill your friends!"—an ad for *Pitfall*, obviously marketed by folks who never learned Barney the purple dinosaur's "I love you, you love me" mantra...

■ "Say no to drugs. Say yes to bloodshed and helicopter warfare."—an ad for *Black Dawn*. Can you say "mixed message"?

■ "Master the fine art of mercy killing."—an ad for *Star Gladiator*. Geez, it seems anything can pass for "modern art" nowadays. Sure makes those art museum field trips more fun!

■ "Nothing to do? Squeeze it! Slam it! Thrust it! Smoke it!"—Or, maybe you can just cozy up to a really good book and think happy thoughts, wholesome thoughts...—a *Mindscape* games ad.

■ "The first time you did it you were excited, frustrated and you lasted about 10 seconds."—an ad for *Tempest*. What were you thinking about?

Video Game Math*



* Thought this equation sucked? Let's see you hot-shots do better: Subscribers, send in your own "math" equations!

Watch and Learn

VIDEO REVIEW

Originally, the staff of EGM wanted to review leggy supermodels, but a strait-laced boss and a burly bodyguard named Escobar foiled those plans. Instead, the staff was asked to rate two videos based on popular fighting games:

Ratings	****
	Clady Crawford

	Kathy Ireland
	**
	Kate Moss
	*
	No Paul

Battle Arena Toshinden
1 hr. • English Dubbed
Unrated (nudity, violence)
Central Park Media • \$19.95

MK: Defenders of the Realm
25 min. • English
Unrated (violence)
PolyGram • \$9.95

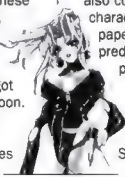
Sofia. Shower. Naked. Those three words may be enough to pop the pimples on any teenage anime freak who's a Toshinden fan.

However, this animated video offers much more than brief titillation; it answers the question, "Why are all these characters—Sofia, Ellis, Eiji, etc.—in the same video game?" Add to that some nicely drawn animation, and you've got one very enjoyable cartoon.

This video should be called **Toshinden 2** because the plot features almost all the characters in that game (Chaos is especially whacked out in this video). Most make cameo roles; the plot focuses mainly on Eiji's quest to find his bro' Sho, and the fighters' battle against bad Boss Uranus and her super-android cronies.

At times, the plot seemed disjointed from scene to scene, but those who follow the game should be able to fill in the blanks. Only bad points: some cheesy dialog (Duke sounds like a *Trojan Man* ad), voices that don't seem to match the characters (save Gaia and Chaos), and Eiji's unbelievable hardcore (he takes off his tight motorcycle helmet, and poof! his hair is perfectly spiked up).

Except for those irritating moments, this video is a must for anyone who's enjoyed the **Toshinden** game. **Rating:** ***



Best Movie Quote: Sofia asks, "Who else wants a taste of my whip?" Well, who doesn't...

Perhaps the only thing more entertaining than viewing these episodes from USA Network's **Mortal Kombat** animated series is watching water evaporate.

These videos not only offer bland, cheesy animation, but also cookie-cutter plots and characters. The result: paper-thin story lines so predictable, it's torture to pay attention.

As expected, the entire cast is in the house, with Liu Kang, Sub-Zero, Sonya and several others forming a Justice-League-esque team entrusted with the task of preventing Outworld invasion. (How these folks

became best of friends after ripping each others' spines out is beyond us.)

The action animation is laughable, with about as many frames as the video game itself. That's bad. Plus, Sonya doesn't look remotely close to the video game's saucy Kerri Hoskins. That's even worse.

Rayden is the videos' only bright spot as a wisecracking god with an engaging personality. It also offers small morsels about the origins of characters such as Smoke and Rain.

Overall, these videos offer the standard Saturday-morning mindless garbage we have grown up with. Only die-hard MK nuts may glean anything useful from this material; otherwise, save your cash for **MK 4** or a cup of water. **Rating:** *

Secret Strategy



Last month, **EGM** gave readers a tantalizing look at the new combat system behind this eagerly awaited sequel.

Now, exclusively for subscribers, Capcom has given **EGM** (and you!) a preliminary list of special moves.* See for yourselves which fighters borrow old-school **SF2** moves, and which bring new styles to the table:

Special Instructions:

✶ Must be done in air

① Tap repeatedly

⚡ Charge (hold stick)

- Fighting Key**
- For all moves, the character faces right. Flip joystick motions for those facing left.
 - Arrow: Arrow shows joystick move
 - Gray Bar: Joystick motion to arrow (example shows 1/4 circle toward)
 - Dragon Punch: (example shows toward, down, down/toward)
 - ⚡ PUNCHES: any, strong, fierce
 - ⚡ KICKS: any, forward, roundhouse

ALEX the orphan

- Flash Jump
- Air Knee Smash
- Power Bomb
- ⚡➤➤ Air Stomp
- ⚡➤➤ Flying Cross Chop
- Chop
- Head Butt

SEAN I'm not Dan!

- Ryū Bi Kyaku
- (hold button) Sean Tackle
- Tornado
- Dragon Smash

KEN the new papa

- Fireball
- Dragon Punch
- Hurricane Kick
- Inazuma Kakatowari

ORO one-armed man

- ⚡➤➤ Jinchu Nobon
- ⚡➤➤ Jinchu Wataru
- ⚡➤➤ Nioujiri
- ⚡➤➤ Oniyanna
- ⚡➤➤ Nichirisho

DUDLEY the boxer

- Machine Gun Blow
- Ducking Straight
- Ducking Uppercut
- Jet Uppercut
- Cross Counter
- Step Straight
- Lever Blow
- Chopping Punch

ELENA the princess

- Rhino Horn
- Scratch Wheel
- Mallet Smash
- Handstand Kick
- Sliding

RYU same ol' boy

- Fireball
- Dragon Punch
- Hurricane Kick
- Chop Down

IBUKI team spirit

- Kohou
- Kubiori
- Kazekiri
- Tsumuji (triple kick)
- ⚡➤➤ Kunai
- Atama Kaduki
- Kaikyaku Geri
- ⚡➤➤ Oiura Ken

NECRO bendy guy

- Tornado Hook
- Snake Fang
- Rising Viper
- Rising Cobra
- Electromagnetic Blast

YUN/YANG twins

- Senkyu Tai
- Ze Sho Hohou
- Kobo Kushi
- Zenpou Tenshin
- Senpuukyaku
- ⚡➤➤ (or) ⚡➤➤ Raigeki Shu

* Like your underwear (we hope), these moves are subject to change.

This month, EGM secretly recommends the following: The Sound Gallery Vol. 2, The Chimp Farm—Tarpon Springs, Fla.'s, most popular primate-related tourist trap, weird books and records from thrift stores, Lion Man (the Turkish Braveheart), two Big Macs for \$2, Psynosis' Mark Day, the Nerf Chainblazer and giant yams from Lone Star.

COMING SOON

PLAYSTATION

Aaron vs. Ruth	Mindscape	April	Sports
BallBlazer	LucasArts	April	Action
Brahma Force	Jaleco	April	First-Person
Caesar's World of Gambling	Interplay	April	Simulation
Clay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	April	Fighting
Codename: Tenka	Psychosis	April	First-Person
Cyberbots	Capcom	April	Fighting
Darlight Conflict	EA	April	Action
Descent Max	Interplay	April	Action
Goal Storm 97	Konami	April	Sports
Grand Slam	Virgin	April	Sports
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	April	RPG
Killing Time	Acclaim	April	First-Person
Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	Konami	April	Shooting
Magic: Battlemage	Acclaim	April	Strategy
Mega Man Battle & Chase	Capcom	April	Act/Racing
Need for Speed 2	EA	April	Driving
Over Blood	EA	April	Adventure
Syndicate Wars	EA	April	Action
Tale of the Sun	SCEA	April	Adventure
Thunder Truck Rally	Psychosis	April	Sports
Triple Play 98	EA	April	Sports
VMX Racing	Playmates	April	Sports
Wing Commander IV	Origin	April	Shooter
All-Star Baseball 97	Acclaim	May	Sports
Armed	Interplay	May	Action
Battle Arena Toshinden 3	Playmates	May	Fighting
Bedlam	GT Inter.	May	Action
Golden Nugget	Virgin	May	Simulation
H.O.S.T.	MGM Inter.	May	Shooter
Hexen	GT Interactive	May	First-Person
MDK	Playmates	May	Action
Midnight Run	Konami	May	Action
Nightmare Creatures	Kallisto Ent.	May	Adventure
Rage Racer	Namco	May	Sports
Wild Arms	SCEA	May	RPG
XS	GT Inter.	May	Action
Dynasty Warriors	Koei	June	Fighting
Ghost in the Shell	T'HQ	June	First-Person
Jurassic Park: Lost World	Dreamworks Inter.	June	Action
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	June	Fighting
Mass Destruction	BMG Inter.	June	Action
Monster Rancher	Tecmo	June	Adv/Fighting
Museum Volume 4	Namco	June	Arcade
Ninja	Eidos	June	Action
Pinky and The Brain	Konami	June	Action
Red Asphalt	Interplay	June	Act/Racing
SSF 2 Collection	Capcom	June	Fighting
War Gods	Midway	June	Fighting
Xenious 3D	Namco	June	Shooter

NINTENDO 64

Dark Rift	Vic Tokai	April	Fighting
MLB featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	April	Sports
Doom	Midway	April	First-Person
Clay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	May	Fighting
FIFA Soccer 64	EA	May	Sports
Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo	May	Action
Mission Impossible	Ocean	May	Action
Hexen	GT Inter.	June	First-Person
Lamborghini 64	Titus	June	Sports
StarFox 64	Nintendo	June	Shooter

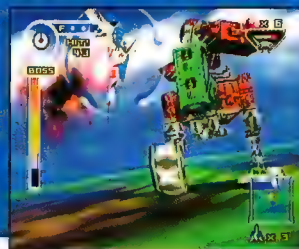
SATURN

Assault Rigs	T'HQ	April	Action
Caesar's World of Gambling	Interplay	April	Simulation
Cyberbots	Capcom	April	Fighting
Darlight Conflict	EA	April	Action
Doom	GT Interactive	April	First-Person
Grand Slam	Virgin	April	Sports
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	April	RPG
Hexen	GT Interactive	April	First-Person
Iron & Blood	Acclaim	April	Fighting
K 1 Arena Fighters	T'HQ	April	Fighting
Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	Konami	April	Shooting
MechWarrior 2	Activision	April	Simulation
Syndicate Wars	EA	April	Action
Adidas Power Soccer	T'HQ	May	Sports
All-Star Baseball 97	Acclaim	May	Sports
Armed	Interplay	May	Action
Fighters Megamix	Sega	May	Fighting
High Velocity	Atlus	May	Driving
Killing Time	Acclaim	May	First-Person
Magic Knight Ray Earth	Working Designs	May	RPG
Manx TT	Sega	May	Driving
Perfect Weapon	ASC Games	May	Action
Ten Pin Alley	ASC Games	May	Sports
Bedlam	GT Interactive	June	Action
Marvel Super Heroes	Capcom	June	Fighting
Mass Destruction	BMG Interactive	June	Action
Ninja	Eidos	June	Action
Re-Loaded	Interplay	June	Action
Resident Evil	Capcom	June	Action
SSF 2 Collection	Capcom	June	Fighting
Tenka	T'HQ	June	First-Person
World Series BB 98	Sega	June	Sports
Worldwide Soccer 98	Sega	June	Sports

This calendar lists the release dates for the next three months. The information is accurate as of Feb. 15, 1997.



WILD ARMS—PLAYSTATION



STARFOX 64—NINTENDO 64



HERC'S ADVENTURES—SATURN

- **FFVII to appear on PS in 1998**
- **Does MK Mythology = MK RPG?**
- **Turok 2 in the works**
- **N64 games get face-lifts**
- **Quake to hit all next-gen systems**
- **Square leaps into show business**

And, yes, are you a type of gamer who looks on gaming only from the juiciest industry rumors? Or do you demand the inside scoop on all the gaming developments and gossip? Is it important for you to know what people in the know don't want you to know? If you answered yes to any one of these questions, then the salvation to your noisiness has arrived in the form of Q-Mann—the sneakiest, quickest-running, most death-defying covert, security-guard-guiding, gaming spy/escape artist in all the land. This month, only a humble flock of Q-spies and I have gone to extreme lengths to give you the type of gaming info you won't find in other mags. On with the show.

For example, most Ambitious Software Company has no idea Squares of Japan. As many of you already know, Square shocked the gaming world last year when they announced FFVII for the PlayStation. Next, they surprised everyone by releasing shots of Total No.1 and Bushido Blade, two fighting games. Then, at the E expo in Japan, Square introduced Aques, a new game label that focuses on, of all things, sports games. Square is also taking a hard look at 3DO's 64-128-Bit MX technology (as first reported in the February edition of Q-Mann). With all this activity going on, you would think that Square would be satisfied in maintaining the status quo, but alas, this is just the tip of the iceberg. The bigwigs at Square are now busy setting up a top-secret design studio located in Hawaii. And what sort of activities are planned at this new studio? Answer: full-length CG movies. Square, it seems, feels that the time is right to exploit some of their hot RPG franchises by bringing them to the big screen. Wurd on the market as Digital Domain (the famous motion-picture special FX firm) is taking a collaborative role in Square's newest venture. Square's game plan is also remarkably similar to the direction Namco (the runner-up for the most Ambitious Software Company award) is taking with CG movies. In fact, it's so similar, Square is assisting Namco with the production of the Tekken movie. As wild as this may seem, Terry-Aki (our top Japanese spy) assures us that this is the case. Furthermore, we hear their certain characters from Soul Edge and the Soul Blade on screen might make a few more appearances in Nintendo's new title, Soul Blade.

Returning gamers to Europe, my Guppies and Ubiquitous Game News are on upcoming N64 games. As the Nuremberg Ky-Hall in Germany was revealed that Acclaim and Midway are working on several new games for the Nintendo 64. First on the list from Acclaim is Turok 2. This sequel to Acclaim's first N64 title will feature new weapons, revamped levels and new enemies. T2 is scheduled to hit store shelves as early as this Christmas. Acclaim is also thinking about porting the original Turok over to the PC using the 3DXI graphic accelerator. Since Nintendo has a one-year exclusivity agreement on all their third-party N64 titles, the earliest Turk for the PC would arrive in March of 1998. Word is spreading like wildfire that Acclaim is thinking about a PlayStation version of Turok. If this comes to pass, the PS version would be an all-new Turk from the ground up, with different levels from either T1 or T2 on the N64, bypassing Nintendo's one-year rule. Iguane is also working on Quarterback Oidb '98 for Acclaim. Due out this Christmas, QB Club '98 will include 3-D polygonal players (instead of the more common 2-D rendered players) and will feature Dave Fave from the Green Bay Packers. Like Iguane, Probe is developing two new N64 games for Acclaim. First on the list is Ultimate Racer, a futuristic racing game featuring magnetic motorcycle sleds and mega weapons. Ultimate Racer will debut at E and is set to be released around September. Next up from Probe is an all-new game called Condemned, a Descent clone for the N64. Last but not least, Sculptured Software is working up an N64 WWF Wrestling game for Acclaim. Not to be outdone, Midway is working on at least SEVEN new N64 games. The same programming team that worked on Midway's Doom 64 has now shifted gears on a port of Quake for the N64. Speaking of Quake, Sega will be publishing the heck out of it, not ME! for the Saturn, and GFI Interactive will be bringing Quake to a PlayStation near you this Christmas. Getting back to Midway's N64 games, the big M (this is starting to sound like a Bond film) is also bringing Joust X, Centipede X, San Francisco Rush, Mace: The Dark Age, Cops of the World and a little game called Mortal Kombat Mythology to the N64. Those in the know are hinting that MK Mythology is the fabled MK RPG that's been grabbing all the headlines lately. Although nothing is set in stone as of yet, we do know the game will feature Sony-Zelda as the main character. More on the game as it develops.

In other N64 news, the recent detection of Eidos' Dragon Quest 7 (the series known as Dragon Warrior in the U.S.) over to the PlayStation has hit Nintendo of Japan like a ton of bricks. Japanese stock analysts, industry observers and gamers alike have lost faith in the long-term success of the N64 in the land of the Rising Sun. Terry-Aki tells us that since Nintendo has lost one of its killer apps for the 64DD DD2 and since Nintendo needs all the hits it can get to drive sales for the new base link, Zelda 64 (the other killer app for the 64DD) might be released as a 128-Meg cart. Although nothing is set in stone yet, Nintendo of Japan finds themselves in a semi-crisis situation at the moment and might have no other choice but to release Zelda 64 as a cart. If that becomes the case, Mother 3 (Earthbound 64) will be the launch title for the 64DD. Although the Mother series is out there in Japan, M3 is only about 30 percent done while Mother 2 is a second 1998 release of the game and the upgrade to the cart. The final release would not be until after the 64DD is out there.

Needless to say, whether it's a family and a Dragon Quest to rely on, the pressure is on Nintendo to produce top-notch titles. As a result, several projects have been revamped to ensure their hit status. One such title is Kirby's Air Ride, which has now been transformed to a side-scrolling action game more along the lines of Kirby Super Star or Yoshi's Island 64. DKC64, once thought to be a 64DD game, is now said to be a 128-Meg cart. The game should debut at E and is set for a spring '98 release. Another game that may make an appearance at E is Zelda 64. Although the format of the game has yet to be decided, gameplay elements are becoming more and more refined. Link is said to include combat moves (something more complex than Mario's punch/kick combo) and SMGs, but not as complex as, say, Soul Blade. Zelda 64 is about 60 percent done. Nintendo of Japan is also considering lowering the price of N64 games closer to PlayStation software levels. Ah yes, the PlayStation. With Japanese gamers going bonkers over the release of FFVII (more than 2 million copies were sold the first two days) and the PS type C just around the corner, the future of Sony's game console looks very bright. From what we hear, Capcom has received PS type C development boards and are now working on both Street Fighter V and Street Fighter EX2. SF EX2 will be the second coin-up game to use type C technology (Tekken 3 is the first) and will appear in arcades in the next few months followed by a new version to make a second hit. Capcom is also planning on port SFIII to game that uses the new CPS-3 arcade board on to type C, although that can't be. The game type C2 version of SFIII is due to be released in early 1998. Capcom is also releasing the long-awaited SF2 compilation disc featuring SF2: Championship Edition and the mighty SF2 Turbo Hyper Fighting for the Saturn and PlayStation this summer. A compilation also featuring Super SF2 and Super SF2 Turbo is also planned. Capcom (these guys plan a lot don't they?) is said to select group of arcade designers and programmers from Japan to Capcom's U.S. offices in Sunnyvale, Calif. The first game the team will work on is a one-on-one fighting game featuring characters from Final Fight. The FF fighting game will run on Capcom's new CPS-3 hardware and will arrive in arcades next year. On the 64-Bit PlayStation front, little more details concerning the PS2 are beginning to surface. Not only is Sony planning to make this super console the top choice for video gamers, they want the PS2 to be the hub of family entertainment systems all across the globe. Besides being backward-compatible with PS4/PS-type C games, Sony is attempting to make the 64-Bit system play DVD files and connect to the Internet as well. To Sony's ideal world, families could buy, say, Star Wars on DVD, play the movie on their PS2 then turn around and play the Star Wars game on that same DVD against another family across the country that had another copy of Star Wars DVD for their PS2. About the only thing they could put a monkey wrench at Sony's vision of a 64-Bit game system with a DVD drive and online capabilities is price. But with the 32-Bit PlayStation still selling well at the moment, Sony can afford to delay the introduction of the PS2. And, of course, the longer the delay, the better the chances are of including link technology at an affordable price. That about wraps it up for this month Q-ians. Stay by next month when I infiltrate the most secure R&D labs and spy the most dangerous body traps and for your very, above my head.

-THE Q



What you get to do: Shoot with gun, shoot with D-pad, shoot with D-pad and partner, shoot with gun and partner, shoot with D-pad and gun, shoot with gun in each hand.
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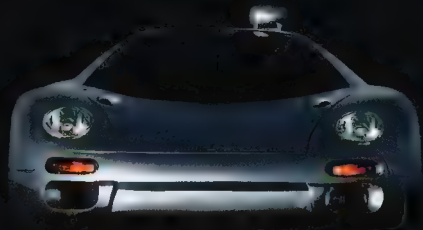
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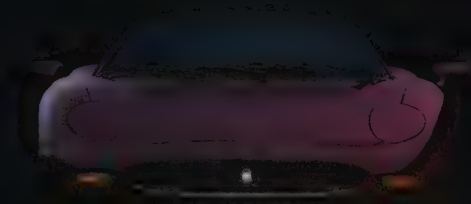


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PROTOS

Here's proof that EGM brings you the first look at the newest of the new games. The following section contains everything from cut scenes to screen shots for titles in early development. Watch for updates in future Protos and more extensive coverage in upcoming Next Waves.



Nintendo has brought many of their trademark mascots and characters to the 64-Bit generation. First it was with Mario, and now with the Zelda series. Nintendo's first four incarnations of Zelda (including the Game Boy game) were massively popular on both U.S. and Japanese soil, carving out a niche for other action/role-playing games. Shigeru Miyamoto and his development team for Zelda 64 have given the game

a third dimension.

First expected to be one of the launch titles for the Nintendo 64DD, Nintendo has opted to make the game a cartridge. The rumor is that at a later time, Nintendo will add on to the game by making an expansion disk for the 64DD. Since the standard storage space for a Nintendo 64 cartridge is approximately 8 Megabytes, the DD expansion disk could be as much as eight times as big.

This expansion will probably be a continuation of the game, probably using some of the data off of the cartridge as a base for a much bigger adventure. An add-on such as this has been used before, as was the case with Sega's Sonic & Knuckles for the Genesis. Under Nintendo's watchful eye and Miyamoto's attention to detail, the add-on is sure to be the game that gives the 64DD its reason for being.

Like Mario 64 before it, Zelda 64 will sport a fully 3-D environment. Gamers will be able to explore every inch of Hyrule's terrain, finding weapons, potions and items under every nook and cranny of the game's world. It's said that the game's interface will be very similar to that of Mario 64.

It has not been determined whether Link will be the star of this game yet, but it is known that the hero is left-handed, which is like the Link we knew from previous games. The pictures on this page would hint at the possibility of a much younger hero, perhaps Link's son. Also unknown at this time is whether the hero will be saving Princess Zelda, or a descendant of the princess who Ganon loves to torment.

With first-party titles being released slowly, Nintendo's release of more pictures of Zelda comes as no surprise to many. As E3 draws near, more details are soon to follow about what could be the biggest Nintendo 64 title since the debut of Mario.

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Nintendo		NINTENDO 64	Adventure	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr. '97	1		NA	NA



Zelda 64

Great Warriors never die.
They go digital.



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IMPORTANT AS A

BOUNDLESS OFFENSE.



GREAT WARRIORS

KNOW WHEN TO

DEFEND AND WHEN

TO ATTACK, WHEN

TO BLOCK, WHEN

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S

Set to be released on June 23 is Nintendo's second game starring the infamous Fox McCloud and his motley crew of wingmen.

The original plans for the sequel to StarFox were first revealed a few years ago, when Nintendo debuted a Super NES follow-up. But StarFox 2 was indefinitely

delayed and then finally canceled. Some of the concepts from that game are intact in this Nintendo 64 title, which will be the next true Nintendo game released for the system. StarFox will be released simultaneously with the Nintendo ForcePak, a vibration-feedback device which straps to the back of your Nintendo 64 control pad. The sensation probably will be similar to a pager's vibration alert. It won't make you drop your control pad, but that'd be pretty cool if it did!

Fox and company will have more missions to explore than ever. Some of them are fully explorable 3-D levels where you are free to roam, and others are fixed flight path missions where you can only go forward or backward. Fox's R-Wing also gets a redesign, able to morph into different forms to take on enemies.

The other addition to the StarFox universe that gamers are sure to enjoy is a four-player simultaneous feature that allows gamers to take on the game's levels with any of the four wily wingmen. It's not known whether the four-player Mode will allow four people to play through the entire game, or just a few missions. Either way, it's an exciting addition to the game.

You normally are able to control Fox McCloud's R-Wing throughout the game's flying levels. Like the original design for StarFox 2, gamers will also be able to control a land-based tank vehicle.

The original StarFox set a precedent on the Super Nintendo, being the first Super FX chip-based game to appear on that system. The power of the Nintendo 64 will push this space adventure to the limit. Not only is the

Nintendo 64 able to display many more polygons than the original Super FX chip, but it gives gamers freedom of movement in a world much more detailed than ever imagined. We will have more information on this game in a future EGM.

PUBLISHER

Nintendo

RELEASE DATE

June

PLAYERS

1

SYSTEM

NINTENDO 64



THEME

Action

SIZE

64-Meg

% COMPLETE

N/A



TO HELL WITH YOU.



...the NG4 could
...le this game.

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PROTOS

YOSHI'S ISLAND 64

With the amazing 3-D powers of the N64, it would seem that standard 2-D platform games were going to be left behind. Luckily for fans of the classic side-scroller, Nintendo is going to be bringing Yoshi's Island 64 to its powerhouse system. Actually, Nintendo states that this game is played in a "2 1/2-D" perspective. This means that the game is 2-D, but the 3-D graphics add an extra dimension to the game. Those who played the Super NES Yoshi's Island will feel right at home here. The hand-drawn graphics have

been replaced with rendered sprites, but they maintain the cartoon-like quality of the original. Despite all the pictures we have seen so far, Nintendo assures us that baby Mario is indeed in this game, so we can look forward to his frantic crying once again.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
NINTENDO 64	4th Qtr. '97
THEME	SIZE
Action	64-Meg
PUBLISHER	PLAYERS
Nintendo	1
% COMPLETE	N/A



DUKE NUKEM

No PC Doom clone packs more personality, cool weapons and multiplayer thrills than Duke Nukem 3D, and now Sega is publishing the top-seller for the Saturn. The game is expected to faithfully reproduce all the levels of the PC title, which is divided into three episodes—two set in cities and one set in space. Sega is also considering adding a few new Saturn-exclusive levels. The game's graphics are every bit as sharp as the PC original's visuals, with even better lighting effects. And don't worry about suffering through the horrible frame rate you saw in Hexen—Duke Nukem 3D is silky smooth on the Saturn. Fans of the PC game may have other worries, though. Namely, will Duke lose the swearing, the bloody deaths, the

strippers and the other risqué touches that gave the PC game so much hardcore personality? Sega is dancing around the issue, saying that they'd like to keep the game as true to the original as possible, but some of Duke's more, er, R-rated features might get nixed. One thing gamers won't miss—as long as they own a Netlink—is the game's Multiplayer Mode, arguably Duke's finest feature. At the very least, Netlink owners will be able to call each other for two-player deathmatches. Sega is also toying with the idea of helping players find deathmatch partners over the Internet, or even hosting six-player Duke matches over the Net. Anyone who wants to "come get some" with a friend might want to start saving for that Netlink now.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Sega		First-Person Shooter
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
3rd Qtr '97	1 or 2	CD-ROM
		% COMPLETE
		N/A

Proof That Demons Do Exist

In the near future, mankind has conquered dimensional travel but the door we have opened swings both ways. The peaceful city you have grown up in has become a haven for dark creatures from another world—Demons! Now it's up to you and your friends to harness the hidden power within you by entering the fantasy game known as *Persona*.

You awaken with incredible abilities that you will need to defeat the scores of Demon invaders and cleanse the land of their forces. Converse with them before doing battle to determine your best course of action. Fight them or enlist their aid in your mission. Either way, you are set for the fantasy adventure of a lifetime!

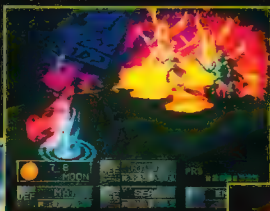
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- Based on the ultra-popular, mega-hit, Megami Tensei series: first time to hit US shores
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- Over 300 different monsters to do battle with
- Morph any member of your party into a more powerful source known as "Persona"
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Persona



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COMING TO THE PLAYSTATION 2
REVELATIONS





**THE SPIDER THAT'S ALSO AN
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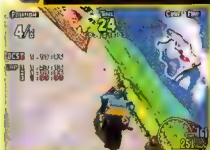
MANX TT



Sega's Model 2 arcade motorcycle racer will be hitting the Saturn soon in all its glorious speed and smooth animation. The home version will have plenty of new features, like at least one

brand-new, unique track and backward mirror tracks.

Other features include two-player split-screen action and support for the NIGHTS analog controller, for those tiny adjustments crucial for motorcycle driving. Sega also promises that the home version of Manx TT will have a few "Saturn enhancements" not found in the arcade game.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	June
PUBLISHER	THEME
Sega	Racing
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
	% COMPLETE
	N/A

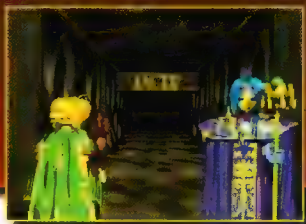
SHINING THE HOLY ARK



The latest in the series of "Shining" games—which encompasses games like Shining Wisdom and Shining Force—is coming here soon from the Sonic team. Shining the Holy Ark bears a close resemblance to the Genesis title Shining in the Darkness due to the first-person view used in exploration and battles, but is not related story wise. Some of the features are multiple-member parties and full polygon characters/enemies that animate during story sequences and

zoom in and out depending on the situation. The battle sequences are highly animated and allow you to see your party members attack the enemy (your character gets a close-up of the creature when attacking). This is where you can check out the impressive magic effects as well as the creative enemy attack methods. The Sonic team fans who were a bit disappointed with Shining Wisdom will be relieved to find a more story-heavy adventure as well as some thing that is graphically pleasing. Where's Shining Force for the Saturn?

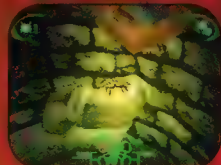
SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	June
	THEME
	RPG
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Sega	3D-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1	N/A



EIGHT LEGS AND HEAVILY ARMED



you're trapped in the body of a cyborg spider. Creeping down drain pipes. Crawling on ceilings. Wandering through



fight cyber rats, mantises and wasps. Needless to say, you're not an itty bitty spider.



fight cyber rats, mantises and wasps. Needless to say, you're not an itty bitty spider.



SPIDER. THE VIDEO GAME.

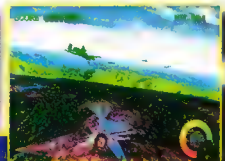
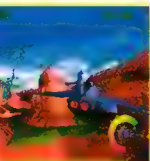


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PROTOS

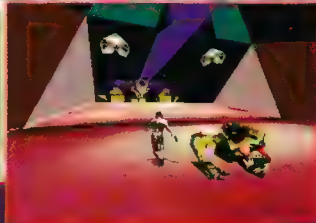
SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	3rd Qtr. '97
THEME	
Action/Sim	
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Sega	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1	N/A



Saturn owners have been without an Afterburner fix for way too long. Sega answers the call with this AM2-developed arcade flight game. Textured terrain jets by as you fly at fast speeds through each of the game's levels. Your plane is custom outfitted with some of the best weaponry known to the military defense industry. This pseudo-update of the most popular arcade flight game ever will no doubt be welcomed by Saturn owners and flight fans alike. It's time to fly, sky-high with Sky Target.



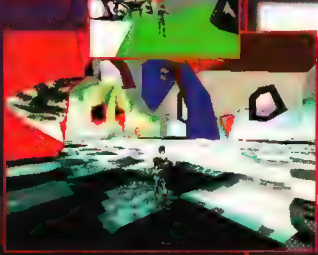
SKY TARGET




MDK, one of the most anticipated games for the PC is also heading to a PlayStation near you. As you may or may not already know, MDK is the creation of Shiny Entertainment, although Neversoft Entertainment is handling the PS conversion.

Due out in May, MDK, the game that couldn't be done on the PlayStation is coming along quite swimmingly at the moment. The game will include all the weapons, power-ups, enemies, gameplay and levels of the PC game. Graphically, MDK is nearly identical to the PC original. Although the PlayStation version is only about 80 percent complete, MDK already runs fairly smooth, features good-looking texture maps and not much polygon pop-up was evident...keep in mind, this game is incomplete and is bound to improve even further. The

developers at Neversoft insist MDK will be nearly indistinguishable from its PC brethren and judging from what we saw, we have no good reason to doubt them. Acclaimed video game musician Tommy Tallarico is producing the musical score for the PlayStation version of MDK, so great things are expected from this game in the sound department. MDK is a unique game in that it is fully 3-D and incorporates some traditional action/platform elements (a la Mario 64 and Tomb Raider) plus it includes the shoot-shoot-run-run activity and intensity of a first-person shooting game (which cannot be said in the case of either TR or SM64). Look for more coverage on this hot title in a future issue of EGM.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Playmates			Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	PlayStation	SIZE	% COMPLETE
May	1		CD-ROM	60%



MDK



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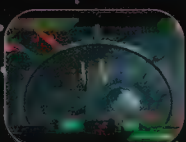
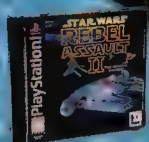
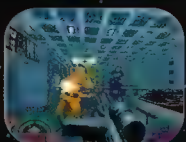
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PROTOS

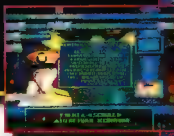
Battle Stations



In the tradition of the Strike series, Electronic Arts is releasing another military-themed action/strategy game. Instead of helicopters, you now control a fleet of ships engaging in naval operations. During the game, you can choose from a variety of ships that you'd like to control. Available ships include aircraft carriers, destroyers and submarines. You control your chosen ship in a one-on-one battle with an enemy ship, where you maneuver your vessel to get the best attacking angle. Once you are properly positioned, you begin your attack. During the battles, you continue to move in an attempt to dodge incoming fire. Battles are rendered with excellent 3-D graphics for true realism.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	March
PUBLISHER	THEME
Electronic Arts	Strategy
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
% COMPLETE	
100%	



OVERBLOOD

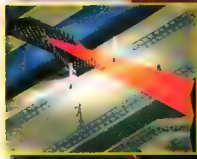
Overblood is a strange new adventure game from Electronic Arts where you control a man who has just risen from a cryogenic sleep. The game plays somewhat like Resident Evil and Tomb Raider, but with a decidedly sci-fi twist. During your journey, you meet up with an adorable little robot named Pipo who will accompany you on your quest. You can even take control of Pipo at will to discover things that only he could. Multiple viewpoints are available, ranging from a first-person view to an aerial view of the action. Expect a long and exciting quest with Overblood.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Electronic Arts		Adventure
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
May	1	CD-ROM
% COMPLETE		
		90%

Syndicate Wars

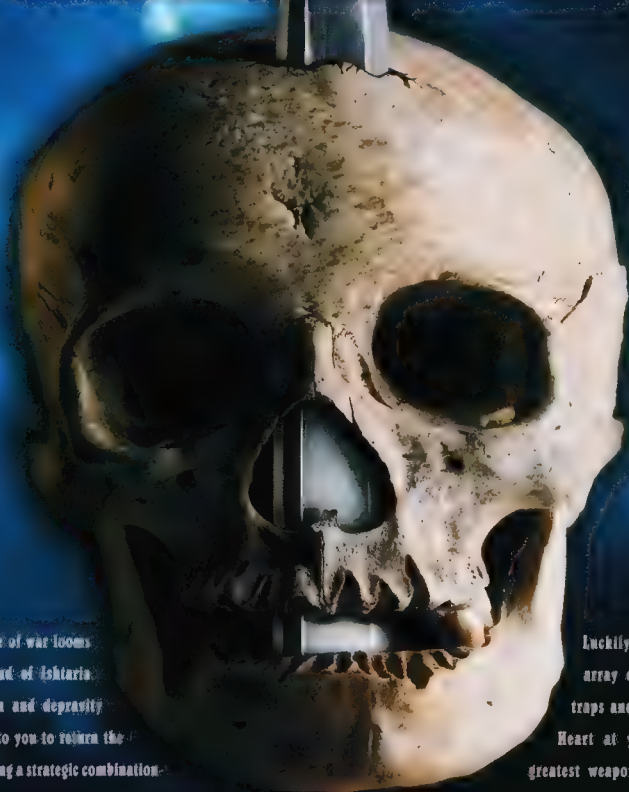
The top-selling PC strategy/action title is now making a strong showing on the PlayStation. Syndicate Wars features 60-plus missions, a Multiplayer Mode and a fully rotational 3-D map. The game uses real-time light sourcing and shadow effects allowing the realistic use of search lights while in mission. Weaponry was a big consideration in the original Syndicate. The console release keeps up this trend by adding more than 15 new weapons that include nuclear grenades, razor wire, insanity gas and time-travel weapons. Players can expect the thrill of blowing up everything in the missions including the buildings themselves in more than 30 cities worldwide. So whether you want to play the role of a Eurocorp Syndicate or the opposing Church of the New Epoch, Syndicate Wars has the destruction you desire.



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Electronic Arts		Action
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
April	1	CD-ROM
% COMPLETE		
		N/A



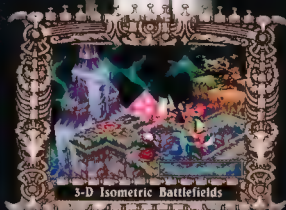
IF YOU DON'T USE YOUR HEAD SOMEONE ELSE MIGHT.



The spectre of war looms over the peaceful land of Ishtria. Terrorism, corruption and depravity run rampant. It's up to you to return the land to democracy, using a strategic combination of wits, muscle and magic. It's an epic confrontation that unfolds on multiple, glorious, 3-D isometric battlefields.



Classic RPG Combat



3-D Isometric Battlefields



3-D Magic & Spells

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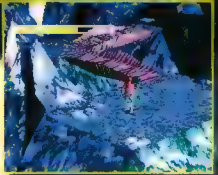


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VANDAL-HEARTS

PROTOS

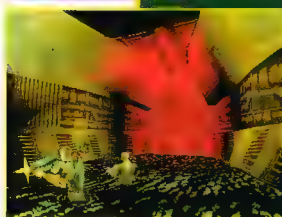
PITFALL



As you read about it in EGM, now it's time of designing the role of Pitfall. In the new game, players control Harry III, the grandson of the original 8-Bit action hero. When an expedition deep in the jungle, young Harry is yanked into a dimensional rift, where he finds an alternate universe under the tyrannical rule of a dark lord. Players will guide Harry through 26 3-D levels, including ancient ruins, a prison island, war camps and mines. Although players won't have any control over the game camera, it does pan to show what enemies and obstacles Harry is facing, making the game part side-scroller, part Super Mario 64. Yet Pitfall 3-D will stay true to its classic roots—Harry still swings on vines, dodges crocs and leaps over pits. Now he battles morphing enemies and can pull off special moves, too.

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Activision		 PlayStation	Adventure	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr. '97	1		CD-ROM	N/A

APOCALYPSE



Now it has a star. Activision has signed A-list action hero Bruce Willis to lend his voice and motion-captured movements to the game. Willis will serve as the player's "virtual partner" and will wise crack (several movies' worth of his dialogue have already been recorded) and take out bad guys with his very big gun. Activision officials are still tight-lipped about their deal with Willis, other than to say it's worth seven figures and Willis now owns stock in the company. Apocalypse is set in a dark and violent future, when science and technology are competing forces.

A false prophet called the Reverend has used stolen nanotechnology to create the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. These henchmen roam the Earth, enlisting evil followers, until the Reverend gives the signal to wipe out humanity. You and your partner (Bruce) must stop them at all costs. Apocalypse is a 3-D, side-scrolling game that will be made up of at least eight levels, including sewers, Blade Runner-inspired cities and graveyards. AI in the game is supposed to be top-notch, especially for Willis' character and the computer-controlled game camera.

They Call Him Bruce



Action hero Willis will play second banana in Apocalypse.

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Activision		 PlayStation	Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr. '97	1		CD-ROM	N/A



OPEN

ALL NIGHT



NO QUARTERS NEEDED.



MIDWAY
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THE MINDS BEHIND TEKKEN 2 WOULD LIKE TO
SHOW YOU HOW SHARP THEY REALLY ARE.

If you thought Tekken 2 was tough, take a stab at Soul Blade for the Sony PlayStation. You'll be transported back to the 15th century, where you and ten of the world's most awe-inspiring warriors engage in bloody pursuit of SoulEdge - the ultimate weapon. Since only one warrior will find it, the battles are fast, fierce and furious. Intensified by the fact that the warriors can fight with a huge arsenal of intimidating weapons. Not to mention glowing motion blurs, an authentic weapon-to-weapon combat system, polygon characters, real 3D backgrounds and a host of other awesome features. No wonder Soul Blade is a cut above.



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Seung Mi Na
Heart & Soul Girl



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Rock Reckless Command



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Li Long
Age of Execution

A close-up portrait of a young man with dark, slightly messy hair and a serious expression. He is wearing a red jacket with a white fur collar. The background is dark and out of focus.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

Cervantes de Leon
The Immortal Pirate



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Voldo

Hell Guardian



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Mitsurugi Heishiro
Lone Swordsman



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Taki

Underground Hunter



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Siegfried Schtauffen
Innocent Darkside



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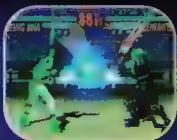
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Emotional Goddess



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REVIEW CREW



VANDAL HEARTS

GAME OF THE MONTH

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

PUBLISHER: KONAMI

CATEGORY: STRATEGY

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: CHARACTERS

WORST FEATURE: TOO SHORT

ALSO TRY: ROTK4

PLAYSTATION M



SHAWN

Notice anything different about the Review Crew this month? Now, one reviewer spends a little more time explaining why the games either kick butt or suck, and these longer reviews take the top spots on each page. Sure, it's a little more work for us, but then we wouldn't want you wasting hard-earned bucks for bad games.

CURRENT FAVORITES

Buster Bros. Coll.
MechWarrior 2
Wild Arms
Die Hard Arcade

FAVORITE GENRE:
Action



DAN

Dan "Shoe" was a tiny bit disappointed with Vandal Hearts, for no other reason than he had such high expectations for it (he still likes it, though). Now, Shoe is dreaming up ideas he wants to see in a Dragon Force sequel. He hopes someone at Working Designs will call him and ask for his brilliant ideas (yeah, right...).

CURRENT FAVORITES

MechWarrior 2
Buster Bros. Coll.
Point Blank (arcade)
X-Men vs. SF (arcade)

FAVORITE GENRE:
Strategy/Puzzle



CRISPIN

Cris was spewing more obscenities than usual this month. Seems he was having an extra-tough time playing through MechWarrior 2. One of his co-workers had the brilliant idea of switching the game to easy when Cris wasn't looking, and now he won't shut up about how good a Mech pilot he is. At least until he reads this.

CURRENT FAVORITES

Vandal Hearts
Wild Arms
Sengoku
MechWarrior 2

FAVORITE GENRE:
Role-Playing



SUSHI-X

Sushi's thinking of trading in his sais for a katana at long last in preparation for E! He's not sure about this new review format, so send Sushi your comments and interact with the Crew! Between putting in many late hours with multi-player games and tons of SF3 at the local test location, he's been dragging his feet lately. Zzzz...

CURRENT FAVORITES

Street Fighter III
Tekken III
Tomb Raider
Twisted Metal 2

FAVORITE GENRE:
Fighting

THE RATING SCALE

- 10-Perfection
- 9-Virtually flawless
- 8-Splendid
- 7-Worthy
- 6-Good, not great
- 5-Average
- 4-Rent first
- 3-Time-waster
- 2-Don't even rent
- 1-Flush it

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Silver Awards are granted to games with a total average score of eight, while games that average nine or above receive Gold Awards.

The Review Crew rates each game in several categories: graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of the four members' scores in these categories are listed at the bottom. These averages are independent of the overall scores, which are displayed behind each review and based on how the games compare to other titles on the same system.

It's hard to find any console strategy games, much less *good* ones. Thankfully, Konami is kind enough to bring out titles like Vandal Hearts in a U.S. market where action and fighting games bask in the limelight, while quality strategy games must sit silently on the back shelves. Vandal Hearts is a turn-based combat game placed in a fantasy setting. A few role-playing game influences can be found throughout, but don't make the mistake of calling this a RPG/strategy game. Even though you will have a few choices to make in the game, the story line is straight as an arrow. In fact, the game is so linear, you will be given some information in the story line that you normally wouldn't be privy to (because it won't affect anything you can do). For example, on one occasion you are betrayed, and your characters don't know it. Yet, you as the player are allowed to see this information. It spoils a bit of the surprise, but this may not matter much since it's the strategic battles that make up 99 percent of the game. The fights take place on various 3-D playing fields. You will have to use the battle-grounds to your advantage; almost

everything matters in the game—your altitude, the direction you are facing, etc. On top of that, you will have to manage several troop types—21 classes in all—each with special attributes and different offensive and defensive capabilities. This sheer variety is what won me over. And even when you're in the midst of a large battle, organizing your troops and planning your strategies, you will never find yourself bogged down in unnecessary details. Some battles may get tedious because every character and enemy on the map gets a turn, whether they need one or not. Such is the weakness in Vandal Hearts' turn-based system. But the battles are always fun to watch (and hear); from the sounds of a bow being drawn to the blood geyser spurting on a slain enemy, you'll appreciate the work that went into this game. On another good note, the computer AI is very smart. It will always look for every advantage it can get in combat. It's too bad many people will pass this game up. Although it is a far cry from being a masterpiece, Vandal Hearts is one of those games that will make you appreciate your PlayStation. —DAN

The only problem I had with Vandal Hearts was the dialog and the linear plot. There really is only one route through the game, which is—in essence—a series of battles. Other than that, Vandal Hearts was perfect. The music, graphics and gameplay were right on target. I especially like the varied terrains on which your party

goes to war. The combination of strategy with RPG elements was great (although the game's RPG side is, admittedly, pretty light). You can't help but love a game that has its characters jump for joy when they increase levels. Some of the spells are very cool, too (wait till you wield the falling-boulder spell—it's devastating!). —SHAWN

My biggest beef with VH is that it's too short; you can beat this sucker in under 15 hours. Otherwise, it's an excellent strategy game, with a solid story and plenty of depth. Most battles require you to do more than just kill every enemy. Sometimes you have to wipe out the bad guys within so many turns or protect a partic-

ular structure. You'll lose a few battles through trial and error, but that's OK—experimenting with strategies is half the game's fun. RPG fans take note that VH is definitely a strategy title. Besides your characters' ability to go up in levels, the game is lean on RPG elements. You just battle on and on. —CRISPIN

Now here's a turn-based strategy game that anyone can sink their teeth into! One noteworthy aspect of Vandal Hearts is the ability to choose the profession of your party members (with the exception of your main character) such that they become proficient in different skills, be it defending or attacking. The

combat interface is very simple to adjust to, and can be picked up easily without a manual, while complex enough to offer a different outcome for each time you play a scenario. For those of you who found Dragon Force a little daunting, Vandal Hearts is an excellent starting point for aspiring strategists. —SUSHI-X

6

GRAPHICS

8

SOUND

7

INGENUITY

4

REPLAY

SYSTEM: SATURN

LUNACY

PUBLISHER: ATLUS



CATEGORY: ADVENTURE

BACK-UP: INTERNAL MEMORY

BEST FEATURE: SECOND EPISODE

WORST FEATURE: FIRST EPISODE

ALSO TRY: D

Weird is the first thing that comes to mind when I play Lunacy, and I don't think this is necessarily a good thing. The weirdness makes the game confusing to play. Lunacy's story line is very strange—almost disturbing—with crazy characters who talk in vague ways. The animation during most sequences is awkward, such as when Fred the traveler (the character you control) walks up or down steps—it just doesn't look right. All of the FMV is grainy, which is a real problem since the game is pretty much all FMV. Most of the puzzles aren't all that difficult, especially since there are obvious hints for most of the puzzles. For instance, in one case (like several others) one of the evil characters tells you to get a watch from the Doctor for the watch maker—I guess they can't get any more obvious than that. The items were self-explanatory, as well (i.e., the ladder is used to climb down the well). That's not to say the entire game is easy, because some of the later puzzles—especially those in the second half of the game—get pretty tricky. The redeeming quality of Lunacy is that it's enjoyable (in a laughable way) to play for the first few hours or so. Overall, even though it's a good-sized game, it's a better rental than a buy.

—SHAWN

Lunacy brings a bit of variety to a market packed with game clones. The story is moody and engaging, but the game won't stump you (too often). Look at Lunacy as more of an interactive story rather than a true adventure game. If you follow a strict sequence, the story will unfold for you. It's still worth looking at, even if parts of the game are a bit obscure.

—DAN

Like Sentient, this game isn't for everybody. It's a slow-moving, FMV adventure that boasts nice, moody visuals but bad voice acting. You'll spend plenty of time mapping out the paths through the game's two cities. The puzzles in the game's first half are just a bunch of monkey-work—tracking down objects, trying them in different places, etc.

—CRISPIN

Lunacy is a great title for this wild and crazy ride to the City of Moons, as the first whole episode can literally drive you nuts! After the monotony of the first town, you will find that Lunacy improves vastly, with much richer FMV sequences, riddles and intriguing plot lines. This game is a tough call, because the first two hours of gameplay really hurt.

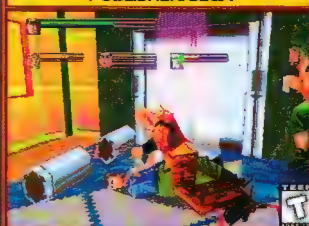
—SUSHI-X

7 GRAPHICS **7** SOUND **8** INGENUITY **7** REPLAY

SYSTEM: SATURN

DIE HARD ARCADE

PUBLISHER: SEGA



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: NONE

BEST FEATURE: GOOFY

WORST FEATURE: SHORT

ALSO TRY: GUARDIAN HEROES

Yeeeee-aaaaa! There's nothing like a good beat-'em-up, slam-'em-down, slugfest to get me going in the morning. While not the most difficult game in the world, you'll be treated to some funny, interactive cut scenes where you get one chance to avoid a fight: Slam your fist into the punk in your way as you run down the hall. That scene cracked me up! Otherwise, Die Hard Arcade is NOT a serious game for serious gamers. If you've been looking for some rock-solid, side-scrolling fighting, you've missed the boat. Don't be fooled by the Die Hard name, either. You won't find any relations of the McClane clan here, which is a shame. What it boils down to is a surprisingly short game with tons of various attacks (though I beat it using ONE attack* throughout the game), mediocre enemies and a plot that would do the Double Dragons proud (at least in the two-player game). Take away the humor, decent graphics and simple control, and you've got a bust. As a two-player game, even the greenest gamers should beat Die Hard Arcade on their first or second try. The really sad part is that pumping up the difficulty doesn't help much since the AI isn't hard to lock into a predictable pattern. Die Hard Arcade is definitely worth a rental, but not much more. *Shoryuken!

—SUSHI-X

Imagine Virtua Fighter combined with Final Fight; I really liked this one. It does get repetitious at times, but most of the levels are different enough. One point that really stood out for me is when you need to perform an action while running down a hallway or other area. This breaks up the action quite a bit. The variety of weapons is really cool, too.

—SHAWN

DHA has many similarities with Virtua Cop—they both brought polygons to a formerly all two-dimensional genre, they both are excellent arcade to home translations and they both have extremely limited replay value. DHA is a lot of fun to play, but you may find yourself wishing that you rented it instead of buying it when you beat it in an hour.

—DAN

DHA is the slickest rip-off of Final Fight I've ever seen. You get loads of moves, cool bonus rounds, screen-shaking weapons—and the ultra-sharp polygon graphics certainly don't hurt. The game is kinda easy, though—especially once you rack up a few dozen credits on the Deep Scan mini-game. The quirky enemies add personality to DHA, too.

—CRISPIN

7 GRAPHICS **6** SOUND **5** INGENUITY **6** REPLAY

SYSTEM: SATURN

AMOK

PUBLISHER: SEGA



CATEGORY: ACTION/SHOOTER

BACK-UP: PASSWORD

BEST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

WORST FEATURE: WEAK ARMOR

ALSO TRY: MECHWARRIOR 2

No doubt about it—Amok looks really, really spiffy. Its dark, voxel-based environments are a refreshing change from the 3-D, texture-mapped, polygonal worlds gamers are used to battling through. (Voxels are 3-D sprites that give environments an uneven, blocky look: Amok is the first console game to use them.) But appearance is Amok's main claim to fame, cuz this game is high on concept (i.e., atmospheric graphics, stylized enemies) and low on fun. In some levels you drive a sub, in others a robot (one whose silly strut will remind you of a chicken, by the way). You wander through the game's nine levels blowing stuff up, and that's about it. You don't have to worry about strategy—other than knowing when to shoot at the bad guys and when to run like hell. The game does give you plenty of enemies to annihilate; in some levels, you'll find yourself engulfed by dozens of foes—and yet the gameplay never gets choppy. Unfortunately, the game does get tough. Most levels are lengthy, with multiple objectives, and you only get one life to last the entire game. Even worse, passwords are few and far between—at least early on—so you'll spend a lot of time playing through the same levels until you manage to get it right.

—CRISPIN

Amok is one of those games that is pretty solid from a construction and design standpoint, but when you get into the area of gameplay, the game falls down kind of hard. It features some cool enemies and great ideas for levels, but then the levels were too repetitious in objective. The graphics during the game were interesting in a good way.

—SHAWN

You may feel uninspired playing Amok. It's a fast-paced, good-looking game, but the redundant action leaves a bit to be desired. I did like the enemies (especially underwater). Amok needs a few more flashy weapons and a bigger variety of locales. You may get frustrated on the "hard" setting. On some stages, the enemy forces are way too overwhelming!

—DAN

First off, Amok gets my award for Cutest Mech Ever to Strafe in a Tough Game. That said, I'll say that Amok is a rock-solid 3-D action title with a nice mix of strategy, similar to a war sim mission. My largest complaint is the overall weakness of your mech, as the full armor is rare at best. Also, I wish you could squash those little soldiers...heh, heh!

—SUSHI-X

9 GRAPHICS **7** SOUND **6** INGENUITY **6** REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

LEAGUE OF PAIN

PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS



CATEGORY: ACTION/SPORTS

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: LIGHTING EFFECTS

WORST FEATURE: REPETITIVE

ALSO TRY: PITBALL

I suppose I must be the only sports enthusiast among the Review Crew being that I'm the only one of us who enjoyed playing in the Professional Underground League of Pain (P.U.L.P.). What you have here is a futuristic four-on-four basketball game (eight humans can compete with two multitaps). The graphics are incredible. Similar to most 32-Bit hoops games, you can see the reflections of the players on the playing court. When the plasma ball is flying around, you can see a faint reflection of the ball (and the sparks that fly off of it) on the floor. The ultra-smooth animation also add to the aesthetic beauty of this game. But looks aren't the only thing P.U.L.P. has going for it. The sound effects are sharp—the grunts of the players, the play-by-play and the roar of the crowd are all crystal clear and add much to the game-playing experience. All is not perfect, however. First, all games take place in the same arena. A little variety in court shapes and sizes would be nice—this is a fictional sports game, after all. Second, like many sports games out there, it is way too easy to steal the ball. Good luck having possession for more than five seconds. In the end, P.U.L.P. has every immersive and adrenaline-pumping characteristic that makes a good sports game...good.

-DAN

I'm not a big sports fan but I did like P.U.L.P. It reminded me of the old game Speedball 2 for the Genesis (which is a compliment). I like the graphics in P.U.L.P. and all of the different modes made for great one-player games. Some of the camera angles got a little funky at times. I liked all of the funny names for the teams as well.

-SHAWN

With its dark graphics, slick lighting effects and cockney-accented commentary, P.U.L.P. packs personality. What's missing, unfortunately, is the gameplay. Running back and forth in the game's tiny arena got old pretty quick—but keep in mind that I don't dig sports games. I could never find a camera angle that kept me on top of the action, either.

-CRISPIN

Ah, the coveted Coaster Award goes to League of Pain for providing me with a very repetitive "sports/action" game with little options or variety. While the graphics use some nifty effects, the rugby-style gameplay doesn't offer much in the way of excitement, especially with raw control and computer perfection. League of Pain is not my idea of fun.

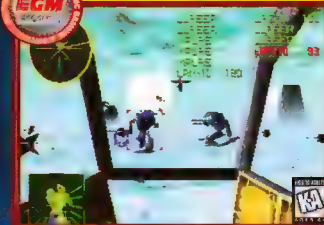
-SUSHIX

8 GRAPHICS **7** SOUND **5** INGENUITY **7** REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

MECHWARRIOR 2

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION



CATEGORY: ACTION

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD/PW

BEST FEATURE: MANY MECHS

WORST FEATURE: BLAND MISSIONS

ALSO TRY: KRAZY NAN

Although it has been dummed down a little from the PC original, Mech 2 is still one of the most complicated and rewarding sims you can play on the consoles—and it's definitely the best console 'Mech game available. You can't just mosey across the battlefield, blasting everything in sight (try it and see how long it takes to get your 'Mech's legs blown off); each level requires a gameplan, a rationing of ammunition and hide-and-peek combat tactics. Put simply, this sucker demands strategy. But that's not to say Mech 2 is lean on action (in fact, it packs more enemies and combat thrills than the PC game). Mech 2 offers 48 missions in all (as well as a few training sorties that come complete with voice commentary). Mission objectives vary widely—from recon patrols to base defense to pin-point strikes on enemy buildings—and the odds are always overwhelmingly against you (fortunately, you can adjust the difficulty on a mission-by-mission basis). But the real stars of this game are its 12 'Mechs. Each is unique, with its own strengths, and choosing the right robot and weapons configuration for a particular mission is just as important to survival as good 'Mech piloting. Jumpjetting around in a 30-ton 'Mech is fun, too!

-CRISPIN

I'm pleased with the conversion to a more action-based console from the PC. The PlayStation pad lends itself to this type of game. The animation and graphics were great—the 'Mechs looked and moved perfectly (better than on the PC). I was never big into the MW world, so I'm not sure how accurate it is about the 'Mechs.

-SHAWN

First, you must realize that this is not a PC port. This is a new version, designed for the consoles. It has a notable arcade feel to it, making it more an action title rather than a simulation (like the PC version was). I was instantly drawn in and hooked by the smooth animation and the ambient music. My only gripe was the inaccurate targeting.

-DAN

Now here's a game with some power! You'll find that the strategy in MechWarrior 2 will rapidly disintegrate into "Hulk Smash!" after the first few episodes. Only the "save the bunker"-style episodes offer much relief from this, but luckily the early episodes are varied enough to maintain consciousness until the REALLY cool levels later on...

-SUSHIX

7 GRAPHICS **7** SOUND **8** INGENUITY **7** REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

CRYPT KILLER

PUBLISHER: KONAMI



CATEGORY: SHOOTER

BACK-UP: NONE

BEST FEATURE: DIFFERENT

WORST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

ALSO TRY: DIE HARD TRILOGY

Crypt Killer is an oddball shooter, one that pits players against Castlevania-inspired demons, blobs, skeletons and other weirdo enemies that gamers rarely face in light-gun games. Trouble is, the game is too weird for its own good. Your character leaps, flips and rolls as he jogs through the game, making for an often topsy-turvy play experience. I like the idea of an acrobatic hero in a first-person shooter, but this concept is poorly executed here (it sometimes seems like you're bouncing through the game). Also, don't expect the game's monsters to instill any Resident Evil-style fright. The garish, poorly animated creatures dance around and make silly noises; they're usually more funny than scary. And your character certainly doesn't help matters. When a gang of new monsters appears on screen, he yells, "Whoa!" like that Joey Punk from Blossom. On the bright side, Crypt Killer does offer plenty of levels—six in all—which are divided into mini-levels that players can delve into by opening certain doors. And you get different endings depending on which path you follow. This exploration aspect may up Crypt Killer's replay value, but when the gameplay is this flawed, who wants to play it more than once?

-CRISPIN

Here's a good example of a straightforward shooting gallery game with some unique points. Let's face it, even though Crypt Killer looks pretty bad as far as graphics go, it is pretty fun since it's so goofy. The "head of destiny" is hilarious. Maybe CK isn't a purchase but it's sure a great rental. There could've been less polygon break-up, by the way.

-SHAWN

Crypt Killer deserves a look for the simple fact that it's different from most shoot-the-bad-guys light-gun games. The unique mythical enemies and playing fields are the best features of this title. The graphics on the other hand are very poor for such a simplistic game. The sprites are a real eyeshore and detract from an otherwise decent shooter.

-DAN

I like a good light-gun game like anyone else, but why is it that the graphics look like something out the 1980s? Crypt Killer really suffers from this, with horrible, blocky enemies and erratic accuracy. Strangely though, the only way you seem to get hit is when the computer decides to toss in a "you'd-better-be-psychic-to-hit-it" enemy to hurt you.

-SUSHIX

3 GRAPHICS **3** SOUND **6** INGENUITY **6** REPLAY

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SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
BUSTER BROS. COLLECTION

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM



CATEGORY: CLASSIC ARCADE

BACK-UP: NONE

BEST FEATURE: ADDICTIVE

WORST FEATURE: REPETITIVE LEVELS

ALSO TRY: BUBBLE BOBBLE

I've always been a big fan of the Buster Bros. games (although I don't get into the inner workings—like, if they're really brothers or not). When I first heard about this collection (it seems like eons ago), I was pretty excited. Now it's here! I've been playing the smack out of this one. Each of the three versions of Buster Bros. is as great as the other. The original Buster Bros. brings back memories of the days in the arcade wishing I could play it at home. Although I'm not familiar with the other two versions, it was still a joy to play through, finding the new weapons and new types of bubbles. What's cool about the two newer Buster Bros. games are the modes of play. I really liked the Progression Mode where the bubbles just kept on coming out and levels increased after certain numbers of bubbles were destroyed (much like the original Tetris in a way). The graphics were dead-on to the originals, and all of the different modes make for hours upon hours (or should I say days upon days) of fun. The only gripe I have, which isn't a big one by any means, is the names of the characters in the third installment of Buster Bros. Specifically "Don Tacos," who comes complete with sombrero, and "Pink Leopard," who looks like the Pink Panther. Talk about silly! —**SHAWN**

This is a fantastic compilation for Buster Bros. fans. All of the Japanese games are included, so you'll see a few new features that weren't seen in America. This game is harder than it appears, so don't be fooled by its childish looks. Simple, clean, addicting—how can this title miss? Even if you've never played it before, give it a try...you'll be hooked. —**DAN**

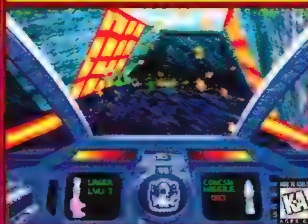
Like I needed another insanely addictive game to suck up my time! The Buster Bros. games offer an ideal balance between puzzle and action, and they're some of the few games that are as fun for one player as they are for two. Although the three titles collected on this CD are similar, they're still different enough so that you get your money's worth. —**CRISPIN**

Retro games seem to be the rage this year, with everyone jumping on the bandwagon, even Capcom! This is a perfect, if not better, translation of the arcade classic. Crisp graphics and tight control really shine here amidst the clunky "next-gen" games everywhere else. Having six different games also helps, and you'll enjoy the Two-player Mode. —**SUSHI-X**

5 GRAPHICS **4** SOUND **5** INGENUITY **8** REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
DESCENT MAX

PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY



CATEGORY: ACTION/SHOOTER

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD/PW

BEST FEATURE: SOUND

WORST FEATURE: CHOPPY

ALSO TRY: DESCENT

I was pretty happy when Interplay's PlayStation port of Descent when it came out last year, but this sequel has put a big ol' frown on my face. It's not that the game is lacking in levels; DM has 36 in all (most of which are based on Descent's PC sequel, Descent II). It's just that your flight through these levels is way too choppy. Run into more than a couple of enemies and the frame rate takes a major-league nose dive. And if you blow up too many bad guys—whose explosive deaths scatter debris everywhere—be prepared for an even choppier experience (fortunately, you can minimize the chop by playing with the cockpit displays turned on and not in Full-screen Mode). Slowdown aside, DM has some welcome additions over its prequel, including slicker lighting effects and environments that are more interactive than before (you can now shoot out lights, for example). But the best improvement of all is the Guidebot, a tiny sidekick you can unleash and assign to find keys, power-ups or the exit. The eager 'bot's guidance in the twisting mazes is essential—especially since the in-game map is more confusing than useful. DM controls OK with the joy-pad, but you'd do well to wield Sony's dual-stick analog controller. —**CRISPIN**

I was never a big fan of the Descent-style game to begin with and Descent Maximum didn't change that. First and foremost, the frame rate was terrible. It was so bad in fact, that I actually had to pause it and take a break once. The cinematics were awesome but that definitely didn't save the game. The variety of weapons was nice and so were the enemies. —**SHAWN**

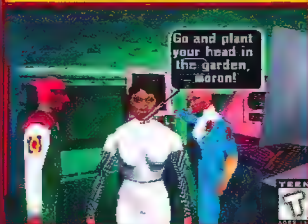
The original high-adrenaline, nausea-inducing game is back. This time, a Guidebot accompanies you during your descent. This thing is a great idea for this type of game, but it can make things a bit easy (it'll take you straight through the levels). The animation on this version really hurts this game's score. The action often becomes difficult to follow. —**DAN**

Not being a fan of the first Descent translation to PlayStation, I was really looking forward to this supposed upgrade. Unfortunately, all I got was a rehased, choppy engine with nothing over the first game. In fact, Descent Max seems shorter than the original so I'd have to question its value as a sequel. I could see renting it, but otherwise, don't buy it. —**SUSHI-X**

3 GRAPHICS **5** SOUND **4** INGENUITY **4** REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
SENTIENT

PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS



CATEGORY: ADVENTURE

BACK-UP: MEMORY CARD

BEST FEATURE: MULTIPLE PATHS

WORST FEATURE: CHOPPY ACTION

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

Sentient promises to be a deeply involved adventure, and it lives up to that in a big way. Not only does Sentient have the largest amount of commands I've ever seen in a 3-D adventure, it boasts a huge number of endings, based on your interaction throughout the game. You are in control of every aspect of your being, right down to the expression on your face, which will either offend or placate certain characters. If you get lost, you can have an NPC lead to the right area or just give you directions. You will be able to embark on numerous mini-quests constantly, and depending on your choices, as well as the time it takes to complete them, you'll face a different scenario. I must warn you, however, about the choppy movement of your character. It seems that the collision detection is overloaded, causing many instances where a tiny corner can inhibit movement forward. Also, the graphics are fairly blocky considering the latest advances in polygon technology. Get beyond that, and you'll be able to enjoy Sentient over and over, as long as you take different routes to the path of enlightenment. And, as ashamed as I am to admit it, I can't help but take pleasure in being able to insult the rude, snooty authority figures who have the nasty habit of brushing you off... —**SUSHI-X**

Sentient gets some major points for originality. I've never played a game with so many different possibilities. Talk about a nonlinear masterpiece—Sentient is it. Granted some of the graphics do look a little awkward along with the movement of some of the characters, but there's also a huge amount of detail. It's a strange one that's appealing. —**SHAWN**

Sentient is one of the more ambitious titles I've seen yet. This adventure game is large and epic. The quest is nonlinear, giving you plenty of freedom to do as you wish. The sheer number of conversational options show just how deep and involved this game can get. It does have a lot of slow and uneventful moments. For patient gamers only. —**DAN**

Sentient isn't a game for the masses. You don't wander around shooting stuff or dodging enemies. Most of the game is spent in conversation, with you collecting new bits of information like you would weapons or items in other RPGs. It's also the first console game that's based on a hard sci-fi story. But Sentient's slow gameplay may turn many gamers off. —**CRISPIN**

6 GRAPHICS **8** SOUND **9** INGENUITY **8** REPLAY

Sweet Dreams.

In the nightmarish world of the Swagman, members of the Dreamflight are being held captive. The twins Zack and Hannah need your help to make the night safe again for happy dreams.

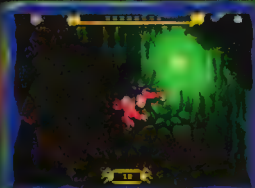
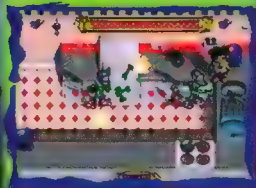
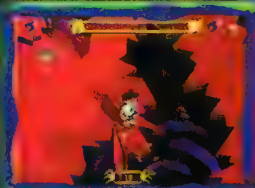
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"Swagman's dream-like graphics and involving gameplay will capture the player's imagination!"

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TRICKS OF THE TRADE

[illegible]

TRICK OF THE MONTH

By entering this code, you can make duplicate players. All you have to do is go to the Options Screen and choose "Enter Name." At the next screen, put in the player's last name (as shown in caps) and then put in 0000 for their PIN number. By doing this, you'll access the character's twin with hidden attributes. The names listed here are the duplicate players that work



You can have twins on the same team or mix and match players!



At the Name Entry Screen, put in one of the names as shown below.

with this trick. You can have a team with twin players on it, or make a dream team with any of these awesome players:

AHRDWAY (Penny Hardaway)
CLIFFER (Cliff Robinson)
DAVIDR (David Robinson)
DREAM (Haakeem Olajuwon)
ELLIOT (Sean Elliot)
EWING (Patrick Ewing)
GLENNR (Glenn Robinson)
GHILL (Grant Hill)
HGRANT (Horace Grant)
JOHNSN (Larry Johnson)
KEMP (Shawn Kemp)



Enter 0000 for the PIN. The player will appear with hidden attributes.

KIDD (Jason Kidd)
MALONE (Karl Malone)
MUTUMB (Dikembe Mutombo)
MOURNG (Alonzo Mourning)
MURSAN (Georghe Muresan)
PIPPEN (Scottie Pippen)
RODMAN (Dennis Rodman)
RICE (Glen Rice)
SMITS (Rik Smits)
STAKH (Jerry Stackhouse)
STARKS (John Starks)
WEBB (Spud Webb)
WEBBER (Chris Webber)

Brett Schultz
Elm Grove, WI

System: Nintendo 64 – **Publisher:** Midway

SOUL BLADE

PLAY AS SOUL EDGE,
NEW OUTFITS

To play as the Boss, Soul Edge, you must beat the entire game on the default (normal) setting with every character. Now, go back into Arcade Mode and you will find the icon for Soul Edge in the middle of the other ones. Also, if you get all of Siegfried's weapons and all of Sophitia's weapons in Edge Master Mode, they



Beat the game with all the characters and you'll get Soul Edge's icon. will have new alternate outfits. Just choose the alternate outfit



Now you can play as the Boss of the game and beat it with ease.
as normal to access the new one.
*Note: The tricks were done on a preproduction version of the game and are subject to change

System: PlayStation – **Publisher:** Namco

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

SMALL AND BIG CHIPS

At the Main Menu, choose "Load Game." Then pick the "Teleport to Mission" Option. On the Passcode Screen, enter the word, LOSR. The game will say that you have an invalid password, but in the middle of a game, you can access two kinds of cheats. **Small Cheats** (full health and energy): For Saturn, press A+B+C. For



In the game, you will be depleted of energy and health easily.
PlayStation, press Square+R1.
Big Cheats (all weapons, use-



ables): For Saturn, press X+Y+Z.
For PlayStation, press Circle+R1.

System: Saturn/PlayStation – **Publisher:** Origin

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

ACCESS ALL TRACKS

This code will access all those tracks that you normally can't unlock, such as "Black Sail Valley," without having to compete and complete a division. To access the tracks, using controller one, go into the Race Mode Screen and select either Wrecking Racing or Stock Car Racing. Then select "Championship" at the Race Type Screen. You will enter a Name Entry Screen. Here enter your name as: **MACSRPOO** and then hit End. You should appear at the Main Screen and the Track Option will be a red cross through it. Go back into Race Mode and choose a mode and then a race type. Now, if you access the Track Select Option you should be able to choose from any of the tracks listed. You will also be able to select any of the tracks, such as "The Pit" and "Death Bowl" if you choose "Destruction Derby" as your Race Mode.

System: PlayStation
Publisher: Psygnosis

PRO PINBALL

HIDDEN MODES

When entering your high score, put in the word PRO. This will enable Turbo Mode and the game will play at double the speed. While the ball is in play, press and hold one flipper and tap the other one to view the in-game statistics such as how many more loops are required to light the extra



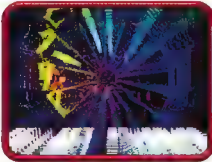
ball, etc. During the "Hall of Fame," press and hold both flippers to activate the encrypted scorer.

System: PlayStation - Publisher: Interplay

TEMPEST X3

LEVEL SKIP AND TRIPPY MODE

At the "Select Game Type" Menu, press L1, R1, Triangle, Circle, Up/Left, Select and Start simultaneously. This will make a significant noise when it works. Now you have access to two new tricks: **Level Skip**—During game play, hold R1 then press L2. When the baddies are



killed, you'll skip to the next level. **Trippy Mode**—At the Select Game Type Menu, hold R1, L2, Triangle, X and Up.

System: PlayStation - Publisher: Interplay

COMMAND AND CONQUER

MULTIPLE GAME CHEAT CODES

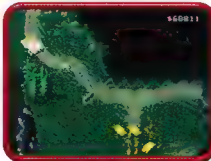
Here is a listing of many cheat codes to help you gain the advantage in this strategy game. To do these codes, begin a New Game from the Title Screen. Once you are in your first mission you'll be able to implement the cheats. Do not pause the game, but enter the codes with the controller while the game is going on.

Money Code: Right, Left, A, B, C, Z, Y, X, Right, Left. Your money will increase by \$5,000 each time you do this trick.

Map Code: Up, Down, Right, Left, A, Up, Down, Right, Left, A. All of the black areas of the map will be revealed so you can see where the enemy units are without getting caught.

Nuclear Code: A, B, C, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, A. This will put a nuclear weapon ready for launch in your sidebar.

Ion Cannon Code: A, B, C, Left,



Build up your money by \$5000 each time you do the code.

Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, B. This will give you an Ion Cannon in your sidebar.

Air Strike Code: A, B, C, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, UP, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, UP, C. An air strike icon will appear in your sidebar.

Laser Code: X, Y, Z, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, X. For this to work, you must have the Ores VTOL (helicopter).

Build Up Code: Y, A, B, B, A, Down, A, B, B, A, Down, Up. You must have a power plant and barracks built before this one will work. You may then use the build-up code to gain access to more units, vehicles and structures as needed. These will be instantly accessible when



Get access to a nuke, Ion Cannon or an air strike with these codes!



With the map code, you can spy on the enemy base without detection!

you look in your sidebar. Use this in conjunction with the money code to efficiently build yourself up.

Visoroid Code: C, Right, A, Z, Y, B, Up, B, B, A. During some point in the game, a visible blob will appear.

System: Saturn - Publisher: Westwood Studios

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Fighters Megamix

—by Sega of Japan
for Saturn

Hyper Mode

To get a speed boost in the game, just play 100 rounds. You will be able to access Hyper Mode.

Play as Meat

A strange secret character called "Meat" is accessible in the game. To access this player, load the game up to the Title Screen and then turn off the machine. Do this at least 30 times. Now go back to the Character Select Screen and highlight Kumachan. Choose him with the X button and you will be playing as the new character.

*Note: The tricks were done on a Japanese version of the game and are subject to change

Mario Kart 64

—by Nintendo
for Nintendo 64

Mirror Mode

Basically, this is more of a method involving driving skills than a trick itself. You must earn a gold cup in every course you race. Do this for every class (50cc, 100cc and 150cc) and you'll get a new Title Screen. Plus, a Mirror Mode option will now appear under the 150cc option. All of the tracks in the game will now be reversed!

Crusader: No Remorse

—by Origin
for Saturn/PlayStation

Passcodes

Here is a compilation of passcodes for the four difficulty levels of this game. They will work for both the Saturn and PlayStation versions:

Mama's Boy

Mission 02: FWQP
Mission 03: PLRQ
Mission 04: SZNF
Mission 05: TD5S
Mission 06: J1BT
Mission 07: K2CV
Mission 08: N3DW
Mission 09: M4FX
Mission 10: X5GZ
Mission 11: C6H0
Mission 12: D7J1
Mission 13: F8K2
Mission 14: FGL3
Mission 15: JFM4
(continued on page 60)

**WITH
PLAYER STRIKES,
FREE AGENCY,
AND CONTRACT
DISPUTES,
JUST HOW BRIGHT
IS THE FUTURE
OF SPORTS?**

ACTUALLY, IT'S

Forget today's big egos and endorsements. In the future, athletes will be fighting over just one thing: this bright, glowing Plasmorb. **Introducing**

BallBlazer™ Champions

A futuristic sports game

created for the Sony

PlayStation that's

part hockey, part

racing, and part

insanity. It's a

action-packed

real-time 3D

gaming experience

like no other.

Have a ball

if you can

Players compete

for the Plasmorb.

Which is sort of like a

ball. Except that it totally

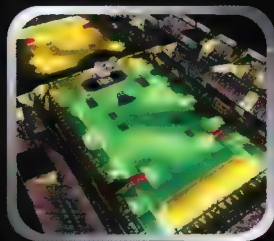
disregards the laws of gravity.

You can't kick it, dunk it, or catch it.

So how do you control it? Jump into



Eight champions fiercely compete for the Interstellar BallBlazer Championship.



Mega-huge arenas give you plenty of room to maneuver. And show off your winning moves.



Glide along in your Rotofoil as you battle for control of the elusive, glowing Plasmorb.

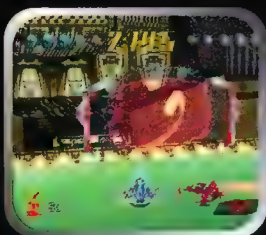
PRETTY BRIGHT.

your hovering Rotofoil, grab onto the Plasmorb, and blaze it into your opponent's goal.

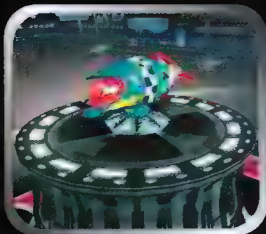
You're not alone. Of course, your opponent is trying to do the same thing. And, that's when all the fun begins.

The competition will be fierce, fast-paced, and frenetic. Whether you compete alone, in single-player mode, or in two-player mode via split-screen. But, however you play, you're in for the most action you've ever had. In this galaxy, or any other. **BallBlazer**

Champions. With anti-gravity arenas, blazing thrusters, cloaking devices and nitroid injection systems, it's the way sports will be played in the future. So, you better start practicing now.



You shoot, you score! You'll taste the thrill of victory as you launch the winning goal.



Earn the title of Master Blazer, and you'll bask in the glory of piloting the Ultimate Rotofoil.



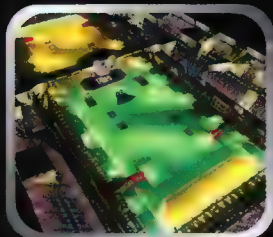
<http://www.lucasarts.com>

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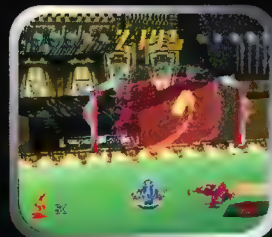
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<http://www.lucasarts.com>

Persona

—by **Adus**
for PlayStation

Here are some strategies provided by Adus to help you gain a member for your party and see the good ending of the game.

To Get Chris in Your Party

1. Talk to the teacher in the room north of the entrance/exit. The teacher talks about a student going in and out of a sealed classroom on the second floor.

2. Check out the room on the second floor.

3. Talk to the student in classroom 2-1 (the one talking to Mark).

4. Go to the casino in Joy Street Mall and talk to Mark and his friends.

5. Go to the abandoned factory where you'll meet Chris.

6. Go to the Yin&Yan in Joy Street Mall and talk to Chris' mom. Answer her questions in the following manner:

Q1) "Do you know my son, Chris?"

A1) Yes

Q2) "Will you please be friends with him?"

A2) OK

7. Meet Chris in the road block in front of the Sebec building (after the world changes).

8. Don't allow Brad, Ellen or Alana into your party.

9. Chris joins your party after the school shifts in the "ideal" Mary's world.

To Get the Good Ending

In the Lost Forest, when you talk to Mae in order to get the compact, she asks you a series of questions. You must answer these in the following manner:

Q1) "If I stay here, I'll be safe"

A1) Stop!

Q2) "Why do you guys fight?"

A2) For everyone.

Q3) "Why do you live?"

A3) For finding the answer.

NFL GAMEDAY '97

EASTER EGG CHEAT CODES

These codes will produce various results when entered on the Easter Egg Screen. To access this screen, choose either a preseason or a new season and your teams. At the screen where it gives you the "Start Game" Option, press in succession L1, R1, L2, R2. This will bring up the Easter Egg Screen. Choose the "Add Entry" Option and enter any of these codes (shown in bold type):

Doc-Reduces the number of injuries.

Hogs-Offensive advantage in blocks.

Hang Time-Punts are slower.

Credits-Show credits.

Equalizer-Makes all players about equal.

Squall-High wind in rain.

No Time-Game Clock doesn't run.

Flea Circus-Players are tiny and quick.

Torreta-Passes are lofty.

Fridge-All players are jumbo-sized.

Frog-Defensive high-dive leap frogs.

Kraig-Fumble very high.

Butkas-Defensive charge and hits are high.

Tempest-Darkness during rain setting.

Shout-Louder crowd.

Big Girls-Cheerleaders are double-sized.

Busy Ref-Lots of BS penalties called.

Slo Mo-Game speed is slower.

Brittle-Lots of injuries, very frequent.

Defense-Defensive catch-up speed returns.

Offense-Defenders dive from far away.

Long Jump-Human Dives are farther.

Dempsy-FGs can be made from way out.

Dervish-Spins more effective.

Idiot-CPU makes bad decisions and coverage.

Blasters-More time to pop a receiver and get ball out.

Blizzard-High winds in snow.

Goat-50-foot high players.

Gloves-Great hands for receivers.

Stretch-Really high one-handed catches.

Sayers-Defenders dive from very far away.

Bazooka-Bullet passes.

Mandarin-Offense at disadvantage on blocking.

Pancake-Blocks resolve quickly.

Crunchy-Louder football noises (hitting and blocking).

Toast-Bad pass coverage.

Scrambler-QB's get speed boost.

Assassin-Recs, no hands on blast, injuries up.

Broadway Joe-Slow QBs with bullet passes.

Twister-High wind during windy conditions.

Home Cooking-No PI or personal foul on home team.

Hatchet-Forearm shiver is juiced.

Tight Cover-Coverage is tighter.

Rejection-Defensive jump is higher.

Piston-Jack hammer of a stiff arm.

Atomic Bomb-Explosion on severe hits, a la lightning.

Ouch-Big hits and high flip hits.

Big Stars-Players with above 87 overall are much bigger.

Bo Knobs-Shoulder charge is juiced.

Electric FB-Players throw and sound like electric football.

Loud Mouth-Loud PA announcer.

NYSE-Swim moves juiced.

GB Speed-Game Breaker-type speed.

Dark Knight-Lights out during night games.

Juice-Hyper speed burst.

Blind Ref-Ref doesn't call PI or personal fouls.

Infamous Pop-Ups-GameDay style pop ups on blasting.

Juggler-One-handed catches, tip off a lot.

Karate-Forearm, stiff arm, swim juiced with no recharge.

Pinball-ostling increased

Genius-CPU remembers 30 plays.

GD Challenge-Hidden difficulty level.

System: PlayStation - Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 3

HIDDEN CHEAT CODES

When you're at the Game Select Screen, press the top buttons in this order: L, R, R, L, R, R, L, R, L, R. Now the game will prompt you to enter a code. There are many to choose from:

MUSIC-Allows you to access the Music Test Mode.

TUFST-Takes away the continue barrels.

HARDR-Makes the game more difficult in subtle ways.

LIVES-You can start the game with 50 lives.

ASAVE-This automatically saves the game progress after each level is completed.

COLOR-This changes the color of Dixie and Kiddy's clothes.

MERRY-This activates the



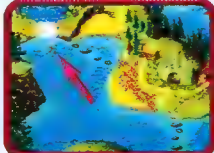
On this screen, do the code with the L and R buttons and then...

Christmas Mode, which changes the graphics in some bonus levels.

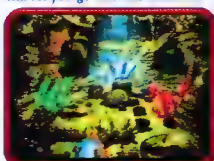
WATER-Enables you to enter the waterfall that is located northwest of the starting point. Inside, you will find a crystal game where you can win bonus coins.

ERASE-This code erases the Best Time records. You'll hear Dixie cry when you enter it.

Wilfredo A. Malibiran
San Francisco, CA



...enter a code. The WATER code will let you go into this waterfall.



Play the crystal sound matching game to get the bonus coins!

System: Super NES - Publisher: Nintendo



DESTINY

is in your hands.

But time

is running

out.



Real Time Audio Interaction

You'll encounter realistically rendered aliens, scientists, marines, warbots, mutants, ~~lycans~~, and computers.



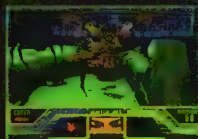
Cop an Attitude

When dealing with aliens you can be nasty or you can be nice. ~~It's your~~ ~~choice~~ ~~to~~ ~~make~~.



20 Minutes of Rendered Cinemas

Highly detailed mini-movies explain your mission, show flashbacks or what's happening on other levels.



4-D Real Time Gameplay

Move wherever you want, whenever you want. Get advice, ask questions. Or just walk away.

Konami[®] presents Broken Helix[™]. Brought to you in incredible Real Time 4-D. Where there's no right way - or wrong way to accomplish your mission. You've got to ask questions first and shoot later. Or you just might end up whacking the only guy with the information you need to get out alive. But don't take too long, or you'll end up becoming alien luncheon meat. Broken Helix stars Bruce Campbell as Jake Burton, the marine commando explosives expert assigned to find out why scientists are threatening to blow up Area 51, (yes, that Area 51) and to stop the mutated aliens from escaping. Either by curing them, or by destroying them. Or you might choose another scenario, that has you turn into an alien-human hybrid. Or perhaps you feel like being an evil scientist this time around. The choice - and the outcome, is totally up to you. So enter the world of Broken Helix, where the only sure thing is that there are no sure things.

BROKEN HELIX[™]

www.konami.com



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See, in VMX Racing™, both you and your bike have fully articulated bods, which means infinite opportunities to sling soil. And VMX has lapped those other Motocross games with the haulingdest enduros and stadiums in the country. We've road tested and **totally 3-D repro'd 6 tracks** including San Jose National (watch that radioactive waste), and Tijuana (think of yourself as a Mexican jumping bean on

full throttle). And for the ultimate visceral experience: **4 different points of view.** So when you kick out the ass-end of your 250 and pop it through the hole shot, you can practically taste exhaust. Trick out your ride with moves like the table-top and the knack-knack, and your competition can taste humility.

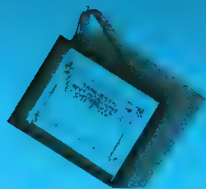
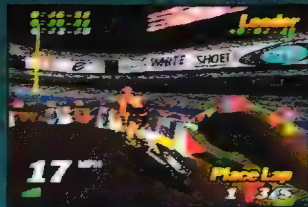
So hit the dirt. 'Cause once you rev up VMX, it's sure as hell gonna hit you.

Why go out for mud when



<http://www.playmatesoft.com>

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The game everyone's been waiting for has finally been released in Japan and EGM is here to give you the first hands-on preview of the completed game.

FINAL FANTASY VII

ファイナルファンタジーVII

AFTER THE SAMPLER

You may have played the Final Fantasy VII demo disc that was packed in Total No.1 and wondered where and if that chunk is in the finished game. That demo is exactly how the real game opens up with a few exceptions. Let's do a quick run-through for those who may have not seen the demo and for players who want to know what's different.



The approach of the train is no longer intercut with the credits and now, the opening space scene no longer contains any introductory text.



You'll notice that, at first, you will battle all by yourself. Also, you will get a chance to rename your character and others like Barret—who will join up with you soon in the battle.

THE FANTASY HAS FINALLY BECOME A REALITY...

In our earlier previews of Final Fantasy VII, we gave you the background stories on most of the characters as well as the basic plot gathered from the demo disc and what Square had released beforehand. The question that everyone wants to know is if FFVII lives up to all the hype that has surrounded this game for the past year. "Is it as good as the last one?" is another question posed frequently.

I must say that at first, it was a bit underwhelming, but only once you reach the overworld map. From there, it's all classic Final Fantasy. The game is a masterpiece of storytelling and world-building. The first few hours were boring, because nothing could be further from the truth. This is the first time you get to choose your own path and branching points that lead to different outcomes.

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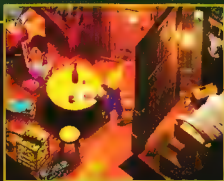
The story line is simple at first and develops into a multilayered drama filled with lots of laughs and plot twists which is to be expected from the series.

Actually, in FFVII the story developments are far less predictable than in previous games and could be the best ever. (We just got the game in and have been feverishly trying to beat it since.) There are branching points that lead to different outcomes.



Next month we'll take a look at the U.S. translation process to see how things are shaping up and find out why it's taking so long!

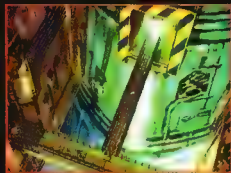




AFTER THE SAMPLER CONTINUED...



When you reach the center of the power plant, you will face a new and bigger scorpion Boss instead of the large mech which is now a common enemy you run into occasionally.



You only have to find one comrade in order to escape the mystic furnace.



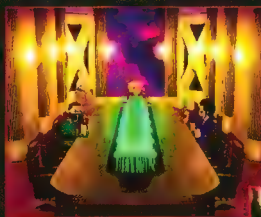
Instead of "Coming Soon," you now begin the rest of your adventure!



After your victorious attack, you will meet up at the Avalanche hideout.



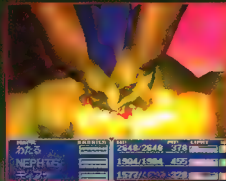
In case you don't want to read the instructions, you can get tutorials from people in the Avalanche hideout.



Pictured above are the scary Shinra baddies at a board meeting, and to the right, we see that Cloud and company have been captured!

Makou-The Soul of Life

Makou is a key element to the story line of FFVII, and it is the energy that represents the soul of the planet. The Shinra company uses the mystic furnace to mine the energy for their own purpose which withers the planet's resources and wipes out the planet's life force. Makou turns into Materia which is another integral part of this massive game.



In the screenshot above, you get a tiny taste of the world of Shinra and the power of the planet.

The Materia System

Materia is the system by which you can control the power of the planet.

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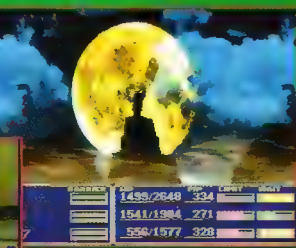
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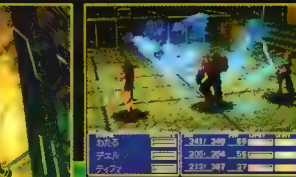
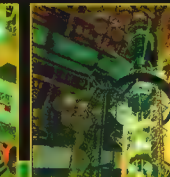
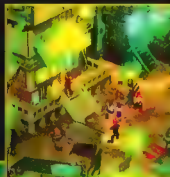
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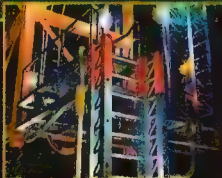
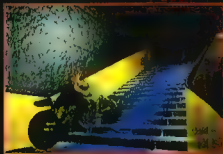
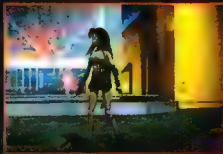
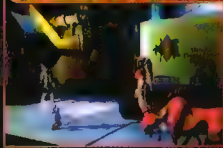
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Materia is the system by which you can control the power of the planet.



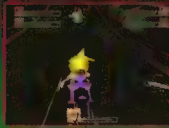
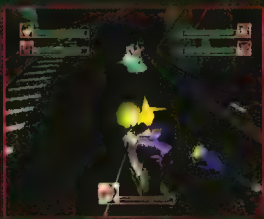
The effects for performing summons are shown in the screenshot above.



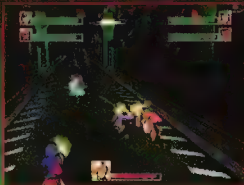


Action Sequences?

Would you believe there is an all-out racing/battle game in FFVII? Well there is, and it's a pretty cool sequence seeing as it's more of a bonus throw-in than anything else. It does enhance the feeling of playing an active role in the game, and there's an amazingly long cinema sequence leading up to it that we have taken snippets of just for you. If you like cut scenes, you are going to think you're in rendered video heaven because there are a lot of them. The best part is that they appear to be seamless with no loading, which presents a fluid feel.



and protect your buds.

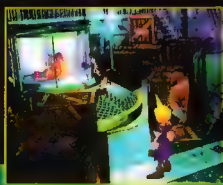
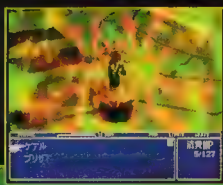
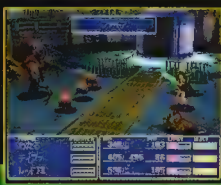
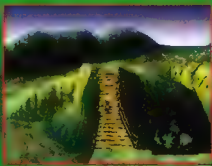


Traverse the Overworld

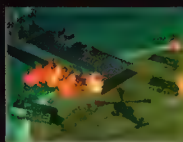
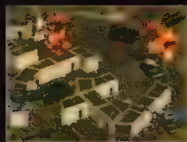
The game begins once you leave the Overworld. Enemies will attack you relentlessly as you attempt to reach the city.

As the game progresses, you will acquire vehicles that allow you to reach new locations. The first

is the traditional FF airship. Finally, the traditional FF airship. It's yours. It's yours. It's yours. There are many different



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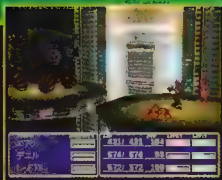
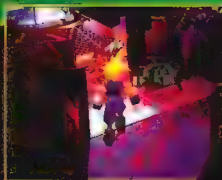
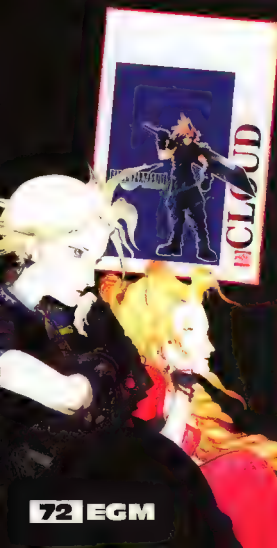
FREE BOOK SAMPLES?

Unlike most U.S. game launches, the Japanese release of Final Fantasy VII came with some really great premiums. The big item you get is a neatly bundled booklet that acts as a mini-strategy guide. There are plenty of photos throughout the booklet, and it's chock-full of character art and other stuff you won't find in your instruction booklet (such as a wonderful piece drawn by the original artist for Final Fantasy I-8).

Another added bonus is that the book and game come tucked into a cool mini-plastic bag depicting the main character Cloud on the front.



You get a great mini-book and bag when you buy the Japanese Final Fantasy VII.



In the Beginning...

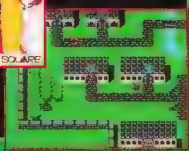
There were several Final Fantasies released on the Game Boy here in the States, but all were from the Seiken Densetsu (Secret of Mana) and Seiken Gensetsu (Secret of the Stars) series of RPGs in Japan.

FINAL FANTASY



Famicom
5,900 yen
Dec. 18, 1987

The original masterpiece that started it all. It was brought over to the old NES system.



FINAL FANTASY IV



Famicom
5,900 yen
Dec. 18, 1987

U.S. fans will recognize this as Final Fantasy II. Square is releasing a remixed version for the PlayStation.



FINAL FANTASY II



Famicom
6,500 yen
Dec. 17, 1988

The first of many FFs we U.S. gamers missed out on here!

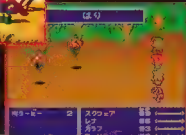


FINAL FANTASY V



Famicom
6,500 yen
Dec. 17, 1988

This gem never made it here, but perhaps it will find new life just as IV has.



FINAL FANTASY III



Famicom
8,400 yen
April 27, 1990

Yet another game we missed out on. Many are hoping for a part I-3 remix for the PlayStation.

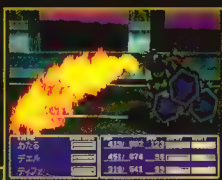
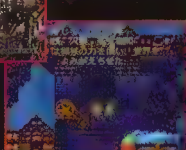


FINAL FANTASY VI



Famicom
8,400 yen
April 27, 1990

One of the most popular in the series, this baby was titled part III in the U.S.



Yesterday, you were a cocky 2-D arcade shooter.

Today, you totally suck.

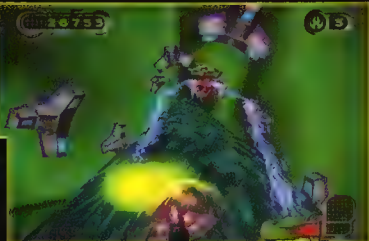


We hate to break the rude news, but you're about to be humbled. It's the 23rd century. Nano-robots are on the rampage. And you've gotta deep-six hundreds of vicious killing machines and eight virtually indestructible nano-bosses. The good news is you can run. The bad news is, in this 3-D world, you can forget about hiding in corners. At 30 FPS, it's a 32-bit firestorm of nonstop death and

destruction. Where the fighting is fast and furious enough to turn you into a certified junkie. With progressively difficult levels and an intense play environment, NanoTek Warrior offers awesome replay value. Which means just maybe, by the turn of the century, you'll be back to your same old cocky self.



NanoTek Warrior



CORE UNVEILS TOMB RAIDER 2, NINJA AND MORE!

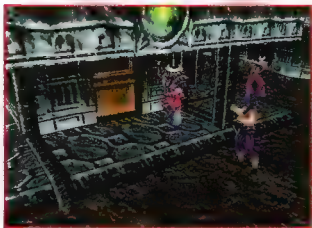
By David Rider and Ed Semrad

Two years ago, Core Design was a moderately successful 16-Bit developer with titles like Thunderhawk pushing the Genesis to its absolute limits. All that changed last November when the company suddenly appeared with a revolutionary 32-Bit disc called Tomb Raider. When *EGM* heard that we had a chance to see the sequel, we were on a plane before Eidos could change their mind. But before we spill the beans on TR2, we have to talk about Core/EIDOS' other games.

NINJA

The first new game coming out of Core is "Ninja", a one-player Shinobi-style fighting game that takes the genre and adds 3-D to bring it to life. The game is set in ancient Japan, at a time when the country is ruled by two feudal leaders. But one warlord, named Katsaki, wants to destroy his opponent forever and claim his lands, so he enlists the help of the evil demon Lord Batanaka. The price for this is Katsaki's soul, and those of 25 innocent villagers. As his castle is enveloped by evil, a young apprentice ninja called Kurosawa (hmm, sounds familiar) discovers the scene and realizes that Katsaki and Batanaka must be stopped. To save his land and people, he must track them down and destroy them using his fighting skills and magic. The game contains three main sections, each broken into levels and totalling 14 play areas. The first level takes you, as Kurosawa, through a forest, a cemetery, a monastery and finally a Demon's Lair, where you meet your first main Boss. The next set of levels lead you through catacombs, a burning village, a beach and bridge section, a boat, ice packs (in Japan?) and another Demon's Lair. The final level takes Kurosawa through an icy wilderness, mountains and volcanic caves before the final confrontation at the Demon's Lair.

CORE



Besides a full range of moves, Ninja can also cast spells.

The lead character can boost his health throughout the game with pick-ups, and various weapons will be placed along the way, from the standard broken (sword), to throwing stars and rice flails. As well as being able to do front and side kicks, jabs, uppercuts, back flips and put-together combinations, Kurosawa also

has three magic spells at his disposal, which act like smart bombs.

The version we saw running was being played through a Saturn and contains transparency effects that'll make Sega owners drop their jaws in surprise. Yeah, you heard us right: transparency effects on the Saturn. We looked at the first opening forest level, which sees Kurosawa cross a river using submerged platforms. The flowing water is see-through, so that you can see the platforms underneath. So how did



Fighting Force will be a Streets of Rage-type game but in 3-D.

Core do it? Simple, they used a Mode 7 floor to create the water, and it's very, very effective. Again, a map editor allows the game to be created and then played through on the Saturn almost immediately.

The smooth 3-D engine looks good, and, although none of Kurosawa's enemies were in place, the renders we looked at were awesome and include everything from warriors to giant spiders and mutant demons. Boss sections will be triggered and introduced via FMV cut sequences, like when the spider Boss climbs along a ceiling and down a wall toward Kurosawa. Although the game is primarily a scrolling beat-'em-up, there will be some interactivity with other characters as well as platform elements later in the game. At the moment, the game's designers are deciding whether or not to make the game a time-based challenge, but it will feature restart points throughout to make it easier for wussies to play! Unfortunately, one thing the player won't be able to do is control the camera angle. Ninja is due for release in August, on PlayStation, Saturn and PC, and should keep Shinobi fans on both consoles knee-deep in blood and rice flails!



FIGHTING FORCE (Working Title)



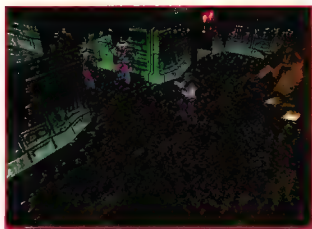


The heroes in FF will be able to interact with background items!

FIGHTING FORCE (Working title)

It might not have a name yet, but Core's Streets of Rage look-alike is well on its way to completion. Despite rumors that Sega was interested in the game, Core Design has joined forces with EA in Japan to put the title together. EA currently has 10 coders in Japan working in a "think tank" group with Core's team, and things are beginning to look good. The game takes titles like Final Fight and Streets of Rage as its blue print and gives it a 3-D engine which means that the player has full 360-degree movement in the gaming environment. The levels we saw demonstrated included a street scene with cars passing at high speed, and the developers confirmed that they intend to make the background interactive, allowing the player to throw enemies into the road to be hit by passing cars. Gruesome, but cool! The main male character can even trash cars and throw their engines at enemies. Players can pick from four main characters, and two players can team up for simultaneous action. If the coders have time, they hope to include a Final Fight-style Battle Mode. The main characters have been strongly influenced by Japanese manga, and their opposition will come mainly in the form of human attackers in gangs.

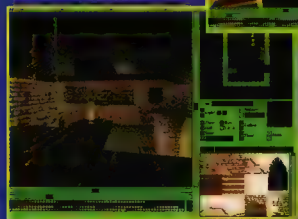
The main characters will have plenty of moves, too. A combination of Tekken and SF moves will be used to create button combos rather than one-button strings like the old Streets of Rage. But, like the old Genesis title, there will be various weapons lying around for players to pick up, like pipes, as well as even more useful toys like machine guns and rocket launchers. Backgrounds will hide power-ups and health bonuses, and special hidden sections will be located around the levels. The levels in the bag so far include a bridge section, Bronx and an elevator, but the programmers hope to finish the game off with six to seven levels made up of 30 stages. Expect to see the game on both the Saturn and the PlayStation in September, but it won't be called "Judgment Force", as others thought. Watch for an update next month.



Ninja offers multiple branches in the path the character takes.

TOMB RAIDER 2

The storyboard for Tomb Raider 2 is still to be confirmed, but the game will include far more outdoor environments and non-tomb locations to provide more variety in the gameplay, as well as the tomb levels which give it its name. One of the levels we were shown is set in a huge mansion in Venice, and is already well on its way to being complete. A new map editor for the game means levels can be designed and then walked through immediately, speeding up the process of coding immensely, and allowing programmers and designers to spot flaws and bugs straight away.



Heather Gibson, one of the graphic designers on the new game, explained the story behind Tomb 2... or at least the story as it stands today—everything is subject to change until the final storyboard is in place. At the moment, the "mythical" plot involves a dead magician named Callisto, the Chinese emperor Qin Shihuang (of Terracotta Army fame), a mysterious cult, a tomb under the Great Wall of China which contains powerful, mystical artifacts and a shipwrecked ocean liner which bears an uncanny resemblance to the Titanic.

"We're doing a link-up with another explorer (unnamed at present)," says Heather, although this might change before the game is finalized. "Basically, Lara arrives at the Great Wall of China. She believes that the entrance to the tomb is within the Great Wall, so the first level (of Tomb 2) involves going through the wall, out onto precipices and mountain ledges, trying to discover the main door."

"She sees a group of cult members getting into the tomb through the main door, so we're going to go to a cut FMV scene where she's spying on them going through the door. She can't get in so the rest of the wheel revolves around her, basically chasing this cult group to discover how on earth they got the secrets to the tomb. And that leads you to clues about Callisto, the magician who used some of the Chinese Emperor's magical weapons."

That's why they come onto the Titanic-style level, because he (Callisto) actually drowned when it sank on its maiden voyage, with his collection of magical objects. So you've got that cult then on the ship with Lara in pursuit. Eventually, we're going to throw Lara into the mystical floating islands, so the last level will be very similar to the first Tomb Raider, and the fact that it's completely weird and very

different from anything else."

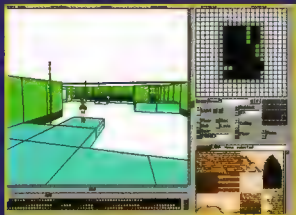
The Venice level, set in Callisto's mansion, is particularly impressive. The house is boarded up and full of magical props which the cult want. These house levels are being used, too, so hanging chandeliers will become stepping stones to different parts of the house. Secret passages litter the mansion with entrances hidden behind paintings,

for example. Care is being taken by the programmers to ensure that all the corridors link well, and the puzzle element is being maintained; you can see some rooms, but the trick is getting inside them.

The shipwreck level is particularly innovative.

Designer Neal Boyd was constructing it while we were there, and is very happy with the way it's coming together. Lara accesses the ship via a mini submarine, although the team is still discussing whether to include a wetsuit for Lara, giving her a change of clothes. Imagine guys, Lara in a tight-fitting neoprene! The sub then takes her down to the ship, which rests upside down on the sea bed. This means that the majority of the level takes places with Lara running along ceilings! The boat level will feature submerged levels that Lara will have to swim through, as well as airpockets and dry routes. The final sub-level will take Lara off the boat and into a large cave area.

One important area Core has focused on is the number of enemies faced by Lara. Answering criticisms that the first game was a little sparse in the killing stakes, they're making sure that Lara will have more opposition on each level. The underwater section, for example, will feature cult members as well as sea life. Discussion is currently under way on whether to include a giant squid, but that will depend on how easy the tentacles are to



program! Likewise, when she's underwater, Lara will now be able to fight off attackers, rather than just be a sitting duck. The other changes to the game will involve mainly graphics tweaks. There will be more dynamic lighting FX and Lara will now be able to climb hand over hand, allowing the use of ropes in some sections.

The only things the programmers couldn't include because of time constraints are things like Lara riding horses and motorbikes! Guess we'll have to wait for Tomb Raider 3 before we get to see her in tight leather. Then, er,

A detailed, metallic, and somewhat rusted mechanical structure, possibly a mecha or a large robot, is the central focus. It features various components like a green and blue checkered cylindrical part, a large circular hatch, and a rectangular screen displaying a green, winged figure. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white.

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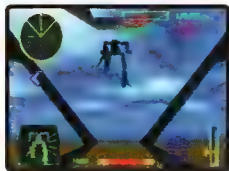
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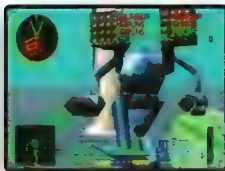
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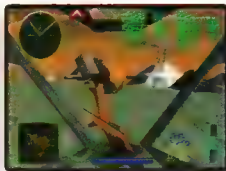
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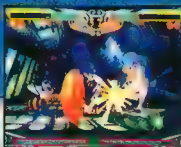
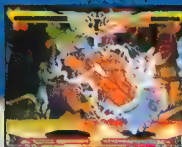
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here are two major arcade shows in the world and both are in Japan. JAMMA is the premier event which is held in September, and the AOU (Amusement Machine Operator's Union) is the other event which is

held in late February. At this year's AOU, all of the major companies were there and the big news was the introduction of new coin-op hardware from both Taito and SNK. On the software side, in a few words, there was more of the same. Nothing revolutionary but enough new games to keep the arcade industry moving along for another year.

CAPCOM: Street Fighter III is now finished and we saw it out on test in Japan. Akira had a special AOU test version of Street Fighter EX (called SF EX Plus), and in this game the play mechanics were evened out and the hidden characters and the Boss were playable. The game could come out this spring, but the timing was unknown because Capcom doesn't want anything to interfere with the launch of SF3. Capcom also had a 56 percent complete version of *Darkstalkers: Jedah's Damnation*. This game should be out in early summer. Those familiar with the series will be pleased to know that the main characters are back along with four more. The new ones include (the names are from the Japanese game) Q-Bee, a phantom coming back in the form of a bee; Lilith, a new girl who looks like Morrigan; Bulleta and the master of evil, Jedah. As for new games, the best Capcom could do is another fighting game called *Battle Circuit*. It is a four-player simultaneous game with the

AOU

main characters being Cyber Blue, Captain Silver, Alien Green and Pink Ostrich. Each character has special strengths. For example, Silver has a strong defense, Blue has a powerful attack and Ostrich can jump and fly etc. It's four against the oncoming enemies, and at the end of each level, the players accumulate coins for the number of enemies killed. They can then go into a shop and buy different types of power-ups.

NAMCO: Tekken 3 is making progress as the game was 75 percent complete. The Bosses still weren't in the game, but Namco officials said they should be within the next few weeks. Look for an update next month. The only other new game was one called *Amadillo Racing*. While fun and cute, this trackball racer has your 'dillo racing down a path against three other players on linked machines. I'm sure there is some type of strategy involved like rolling up in a ball to let your heart rate slow down (it looks like this is the first game where you can have a heart attack), but this game got tired real quick.

KONAMI: First on their list was a new demo of what their top-secret



Cobra hardware could do. Their fighting game had real backgrounds with the characters doing actual moves. One of the fighting areas was a field of tall grass which swayed back and forth in the wind. Still, unfortunately, it was only a tape, and whether Konami can make this one play as good as it looks has yet to be determined. But their programmers have been very busy as they also showed a new racing game, and it was in our opinion the best visual of the show. Again, it was only a tape. As for real games, they had a finished version of a new two-player machine gun



Thunder Hurricane-Konami

Once again, polygon gun games with high casualty rates were ever-present. Both Sega and Konami featured their latest.



House of the Dead-Sega



Hang Pilot-Konami



BATTLE CIRCUIT



Untitled Cobra game—Konami



Top Skater—Sega



Taito Wolf 3DX untitled Racing Game



Virtua Striker 2—Sega

game called Operation Thunder Hurricane. Nothing revolutionary, just another shoot-anything-that-moves-type game. The gun did have a nice recoil though. Their second major game was a hang glider game called Hang Pilot. This coin-op features two screens, one for your view ahead and the second for a look at the ground. You must control the rudder with your feet by moving left or right, and your goal is to navigate the course in the fastest time.

SEGA: Besides Scud Race (name to change) Sega debuted their third Model 3 board game. Called Virtua Striker 2, this soccer sim utilizes the power and speed of the Model 3 board to produce the fastest and most realistic polygon sports game to date. You have to love soccer to like this game, and if you do, it's all in here. Their second game was another shooting game but it wasn't Virtua Cop 3. Cop 3 is in development but it won't make its debut until the September JAMMA show. Still utilizing the Model 2 board, Sega's next new title was House of the Dead. It is a two-player cooperative shooter. Blowing away zombies (green



Armadillo Racing—Namco

blood) is the obvious plot, but Sega officials were quick to point out that this game was more interactive in that it could branch off in different directions yielding many different paths to follow. It looks like a good Saturn game for later this year. **Top Skater** is the newest in Sega's long line of "participation" games. Yep, you get to stand on a skateboard and you earn points for performing various tricks and maneuvers. **TAITO:** The big news from Taito was their new Wolf 3-DEX hardware. The specs are shown above, but based on the demo that they had running of Psychic Force 2 and their Untitled Racing Game, it looked like Taito could make a comeback in the arcade market. The games were fully 3-D, featured virtually invisible polygon graphics and very fast action. Still, we'll have to see what a real game looks like. Retro is still in and Taito had a new version of Arkanoid Returns—more of the same 8-Bit NES gameplay. Darius just won't go away, and in this version, the hook is 3-D. In essence they did the same with Darius G as Namco did with Xevious.

SNK: Last but not least, the surprise of the

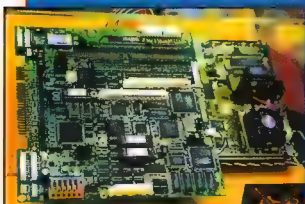


Sega wowed the crowds with their next Model 3 board title Virtua Striker 2. Loads of smooth animation are abound.

show was SNK's official debut of their new 64-Bit game system. Appropriately called Neo-Geo 64, little real information was available as all they had was a tape running and even that contained only a few seconds of "real" 3-D action. Their first 64-Bit game will be Samurai Shodown 64 which should be out later in 1997. We've picked the best examples from the tape, and if this is representative of what they can do, it looks like Neo-Geo fans will finally be able to play a real 3-D fighting game. The rotating camera made for a very impressive demo—even the backgrounds had some actual 3-D depth to them. As for a home system? This was the furthest thought from their minds. SNK execs wanted to get the new arcade hardware out before they even started to consider what they would do with the home market. More as it develops.



Top Skater—Sega

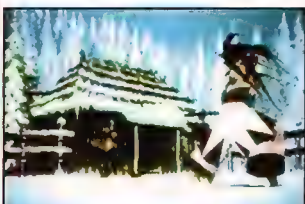


Wolf 3DX Arcade System Board—Taito

Taito Wolf System specs

Number of Polygons: 1,000,000/sec.
Pixel Capability: 45,000,000/sec.
Resolution: 512 x 384
Effects: Z-Buffer; 1/2 transparency;
fog; mipmap; perspective
correction; Gouraud Shading.
Future Games: Psychic Force 2
and untitled racing game.

Taito unveiled their new fancy 3-D graphics arcade board. Only a few demo games were displayed.



Samurai Shodown 64—SNK



Samurai Shodown 64—SNK



Street Fighter EX Plus—Capcom



Sky Polystars—Konami



Darius G 50—Taito

DA BOSS IS BACK!

YOU MUST DEFEAT SHENG LONG TO STAND A CHANCE...



Sheng's air red fireball works like Akuma's red fireball, but with the nasty effect of slamming you to the turf too.

Akuma must be shaking in his gis, now that his missing brother, whom Akuma thought he murdered years ago, is back and ready to rumble! Players from Japan know him as Gouken, but here in the States, we call him Sheng Long! Read closely as we retrace history and fill you in on Sushii's scoop of a lifetime.

In a time before the first Street Fighter Tournament, two young brothers, Gouki (Akuma) and Gouken (Sheng Long) trained under their master, Goutsetsu (no American name yet). Learning under the master for many years, the brothers soon became competitive to the point of rage and dishonor. Finally, Master Goutsetsu sent each brother on separate paths so that they may tap the inner strength of their individual souls. On one hand, Gouki embraced the evil in his soul and embraced the killing arts of Shotokan. On the other, Gouken purged his rage and removed the killing aspects of Shotokan, thereby elevating it to a true martial art, just for more power, it is rumored that Gouki returned to Goutsetsu and murdered him. Shortly afterward, Gouki began his long hunt for his only living equal, Gouken.

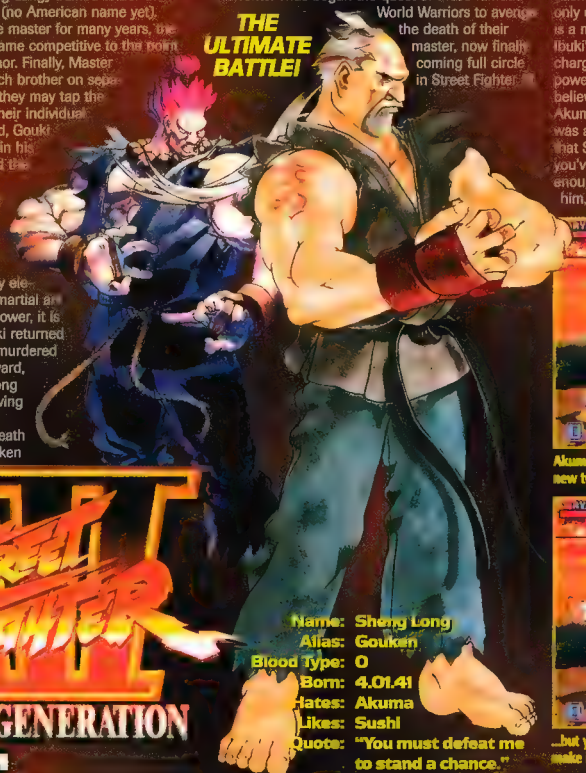
Soon after the death of his Master, Gouken



The Dojin-Shinku-ken, or Shocking Dragon Punch, is Sheng Long's first Super Art, and is also his most deadly.

began training two young men, Ryu and Ken. In his elegant Shotokan martial art. Many years later, Ken and Ryu spotted the brothers fighting atop a mountain ridge at dawn, and witnessed their master fall into the cold, dark river below. The two young warriors attacked Gouki, only to be tossed aside. Gouki, uninterested in two weak boys, vanished. Ryu and Ken never found Gouken's body, washed out to sea by the raging currents. Thus began the quest of these famous World Warriors to avenge the death of their master, now finally coming full circle in Street Fighter.

THE ULTIMATE BATTLE!



Name: Sheng Long
Alias: Gouken
Blood Type: O
Born: 4.01.41
Hates: Akuma
Likes: Sushii
Quote: "You must defeat me to stand a chance."



If you're unlucky enough to be hit by this unblockable move, you'll lose half your life, AND be stunned to boot!

Now that the Boss of the decade has returned, what can YOU expect? Well, check out these screens to find out! Obviously scarred from his battle with Akuma years ago (a long scar is stretched across his right eye), Sheng Long here scores to settle. He's restored several of his "killing" techniques for the sole purpose of destroying Akuma. His first Super Art is a Shocking Dragon Punch (shown here—thanks, Sushii!), which is unblockable and stuns. He can only charge one of these at a time. His second Art is a multiple-air fireball barrage, similar to one of Ibuki's Arts, but with greater range. He can charge this for three levels. Judging from the power symbol burned into his shoulder, we believe his third Super Art must be similar to Akuma's Demon Barrage, but no additional info was available at press time. It IS known, however, that Sheng Long will appear as a sub-Boss if you've "mastered" your character sufficiently enough for him to test your puny skills. To reach him, you will need at least six perfects and...



Akuma's double air fireball was bad, but how about this new twist? As a ground move, you may avoid the first...



...but you'll probably be clobbered by the second! To make it worse, the high fireball is hard to jump over.

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SEGA SATURN™



PlayStation



Liu Kang, Sonya Blade and Sub-Zero (who brings another story element to the game).

BY: SUSHI-X AND MARK HAIN

Mortal Kombat 4! When our Sushi-X heard a rumor that Midway had the game in development, he took his sleeping bag and camped out on Midway's doorstep. After tripping a few people on their way into the building, Midway decided to allow EGM the first exclusive interview with the head honchos of the MK4 team.

EGM: Let's start at the beginning. Is there a story line?

Ed Boud: You know what, this is actually the earliest we've ever talked to anybody about one of the MK games. So you've caught us at a point where the story isn't developed completely. We haven't established exactly all the characters who are returning.

EGM: The date you have set is August, right?

EB: It would be best to say summer or fall.

Pat Fitzgerald: It's a giant game and the anticipation is so high. We want to talk to you guys too because we don't want to avoid it...or I guess start limiting the anticipation...because it's going to be a huge game for us. We've got to be careful about announcing dates and being too definite about things, because I think that affects other parts of the whole process.

EGM: We hear of another MK game?

EB: Yeah, that's the one that John's working on. The working title is Mortal Kombat Mythologies, and then the word Sub-Zero.

EGM: And that's the home game?

EB: Right.

EGM: Will MK4 be on new hardware?

EB: That's what we've been doing the past several months. So Dave was working in conjunction with Mark Loffredo and Todd Allen, who are programmers on the game, just defining the hardware. This new proprietary hardware cranks out over 1 million polygons a second. We're using the same microprocessor (DSP) as Crus'n USA but that's where the similarity ends.

EGM: What about a sequel arrive?

MK4

EGM EXCLUSIVE!



EB: It's not in MK4 for two reasons: one is cost, another is that we wanted to be able to have very fast access to our textures and stuff. We wanted to be able to do the kind of stuff that we did in the other games where you have multiple backgrounds, and you're smashing, through, and show multiple characters, instead of just the two that you're fighting. So with an MPROM, it allows us to access it a lot faster.

EGM: What made you decide to go to 3-D?

EB: Well, we've opened the doors for a lot more stuff that we can do. We pretty much hit a brick wall with MK3. When you get 3-D, all of a sudden you can look at characters in different angles, and you can do a lot more outrageous effects with fatalities and stuff like that. You're essentially working in a real world as opposed to just putting up sprites. You'd be amazed at how many ideas have been coming in. Now it just becomes a matter of what we're going to have time to put in.

EGM: Are you utilizing characters?

EB: We are using motion capture for the motion, and for the characters we go to our studio and video grab real-live people. The only difference is that the whole texture-mapping

EGM: Is the combat system still in the game?

EB: Yes but with each game we want to expand on the previous one without eliminating any of the features that people liked about it. But with this new feature, I don't want to keep going back to it, it's really going to change the way you play the game. It's still going to feel like MK; you're still going to be able to jump, which I don't think any 3-D game has really done yet.

EGM: Will it still be a jump kick, hop kick kind of a thing...those motions?

EB: It's going to play really tight, and really fast, and it's going to be a real test of reflexes.

EGM: You put the Run button in because you're a big fan of more aggressive, more active combat. Is this new feature based on that also?

EB: Yeah, as a matter of fact it is. We're also going to add more complicated stuff that the better players will be able to pick up and not air blocking.

EGM: How kind of tight is with the new moves?

EB: The more comes from the game.

We've got characters that are over 3,000 polygons...

process is completely different, where we have a lot more avenues to go. We've got characters that are over 3,000 polygons, just for one character, and when you start getting that many polygons you lose the polygon look—everything just kinda blends into one natural, organic-looking person.

EGM: Is there anything unique that you are looking to introduce?

EB: We are going to add a revolutionary feature. Unfortunately, I can't talk about it. We feel that this one will be way bigger than the Run button. You guys will be the first to know.

EGM: What else can you say about MK4?

EB: Well, Rayden is back, as is Scorpion. It's going to be pretty dark and we're going to steer away from humor.

EGM: So you will take the friendship out?

EB: I don't think we're going to have friendships or fatalities in this one. More on hidden stuff, big time. You know how we added a feature into the Versus Screen? We're doing stuff like that. We'll keep you informed as to what's going on.



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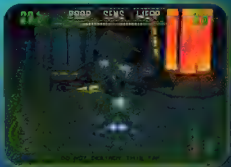
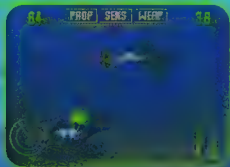
- 20mm millimetercannon point laser
- 31 GAT millimeter wave torpedo
- 6" Phalanx laser wave torpedo
- 6" Mark-60 Thunder torpedo
- 6" Mark-43 Missile torpedo
- 6" Mark-45 Barrage wire guided torpedo

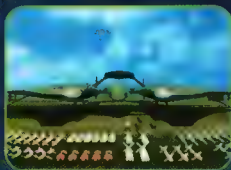
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WAAAGH!

WAAAGH!

WAAAGH!

WAAAGH!

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PROBE HAS THE GAMES TO BRING ACCLAIM BACK TO LIFE!

By David Rider and Ed Semrad

If the financial pages are anything to go by, then Acclaim didn't have a particularly happy new year. But just outside London, the guys at the company Acclaim acquired last year, Probe Entertainment, have been having what the Brits refer to as a "blinder." So when the Ed in Chief and I were offered the chance to scope out Probe's new projects by the company's head honcho, Fergus McGovern, we hopped on the next train to sunny Croydon.

And surprised we were! First up is a game code named *Condemned*, an awesome first-person perspective shooter on the N64, PlayStation, Saturn and PC. It's Fergus' baby—a special project he has a team of 15 working on. With this game they really wanted to do something different, and having seen it run, we can confirm that he's done just that. *EGM* was in the privileged position of being the first magazine to get an exclusive look at this new title, and impressive is a major understatement. *Condemned* is a stunning futuristic corridor shoot-'em-up that merges the game styles of *WipeOut* and *Tunnel B1* with more than just a hint of *Alien Trilogy*'s tension. You control a hovering craft that looks like something out of *Mad Max*, flies faster than an F16 and carries more firepower than the average aircraft carrier! You're pitted against a multitude of other fighters in a complex of cramped, claustrophobic, metallic corridors on a war-torn, desolate planet. There are power-ups and bonuses everywhere, but you've really got to keep your eyes open, because the maze-like corridor layout means that enemies can approach you from anywhere: above, below and especially behind. One of the most coolest pick-ups we saw was an invisibility shield which allows you to sneak up right behind an enemy and blow him away before he even knows what hit him. A missile camera lets you follow your weapons in for the kill, and you can even leave a bomb or missile waiting in a corridor while you watch (through its camera) until an enemy comes along and you activate the bomb! There are only two views available, a 3-D cockpit view which shows your instrument layout and a full-screen view. You can check your six with a nifty rear-view mirror-style option. The game moves at a lightning pace, and screen shots really can't do it justice. One of the main problems with previous high-speed PlayStation racers was polygon clipping and folding. Probe has overcome this by simply stretching the backgrounds to give the impression of speed. It works, and it's so simple—even they were



You start your game with only the very basics—wooden shacks and a few settlers.

surprised that nobody else had thought of it. The PlayStation version we saw running wasn't complete, but the graphics engine and craft looked fantastic and the speed has to be seen to be believed. A two-player split-screen version of the game is definitely heading toward Sony players, but Probe is still deciding on whether a link-up option is financially worthwhile. It'll knock your socks off when it's released, and Probe is already putting together ideas for *Condemned 2*!

SPIRIT MASTER

Probe is also hard at work on a PlayStation-only beat-'em-up called *Spirit Master*. The game features mythological characters from various cultures across the globe—such as Minos, Baron Samedi, Omega and Caliban—all drawn together by Mantis, who has transported them through his Spirit Gate and turned ordinary mortals into the Spirit Masters. Probe is giving each of the characters a reason for fighting, and

Fergus McGovern—head honcho at Probe



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CRIMEWAVE



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SEGA SATURN

1 or 2
PLAYERS

CONSTRUCTOR

Maybe your first time title is *Constructor* for the PlayStation, a game which has been in development for two and a half years and takes the Sim game idea to its Nth degree. Fergus states: "It was a project that we'd been after for a long time, but it was originally with Warner. When they were going through some problems, we jumped in and snatched it up. We've been working on it ever since. It's a single- or multiplayer game, kind of like *SimCity* crossed with *Command & Conquer* whereby you've got to build up neighborhoods in the process or building them up, you've got to keep all your families that live there happy."

Robert O'Farrell, the game's producer for Probe, gave us a quick run-through. "You start off with an empty screen and build your houses from scratch, opening a lumber yard and bringing in the wood before you can do anything else. Once your wooden houses are up, you get grade-one tenants, with the idea being that you constantly upgrade tenants. But while you're doing that, the computer player (or your opponent) is building, too. However, your opponent can send in the Mafia to smash things up, or even put ghosts in your houses to haunt and drive out the tenants!" Probe is absolutely not your nice little, laid-back simulator.



All is peaceful in suburbia (left). However, watch over your city as the computer (or opponent) can start causing trouble, like burning your houses down or haunting them with ghosts.

putting in place a hefty backstory to the game. Producer Joe Bonnar explained some of the details. "Essentially it's a martial arts game. What we've done is take the top-class martial artists in the country—be they champions, leaders in their field or instructors—and we're applying their fighting styles and moves to a number of characters from legends around the world. "All the fighters are motion-captured, soft-skin polygonal characters, all Gouraud shaded and each will be influenced by lighting effects in-game. We've included elements

from games like *Virtua Fighter 3*, so that you can climb above your enemy and fight on higher levels rather than just have the play area restricted to one screen, so Spirit Master runs to two frames." Other in-game elements include magic, or Chi, that can be built up by holding button combos and allow characters to affect the gaming environment and their opponents.

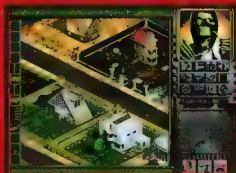
Controlling your fighter's anger and building it up via an on-screen menu bar will create weapons specific to each character. But it doesn't end there, because the game has a full 3-D environment, you can perform side-steps, rolls, ring-outs and more. Probe has even included a Four-player Mode, which'll have your friends battling against each other. The most important aspect of the game, however, are the moves. Besides putting together

intricate combos, the team is working to include control over the left and right halves of the fighters' bodies, providing it doesn't make things too complicated. That means that in "Hard" Mode, when you're attacked, simply performing a block won't do—you'll have to use the correct side of your character's body in order to block an attack. Of course, in "Easy" Mode, you'll just be able to pick it up and play, but for players looking for an ultra-tough challenge, Spirit Master looks like it has all the

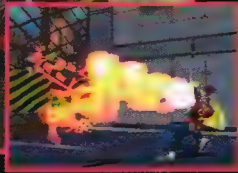


As your town develops and evolves into a modern city, you still are in charge of maintaining the homes and keeping your people happy.

bases covered. A special Tekken-style Mode will allow players to fight on a nice, flat frame area at a higher frame rate over one screen, but why play that when the Spirit Master backgrounds look so cool in full 3-D? Martial arts fanatics and fight lovers can look forward to seeing this one on the PlayStation in time for Christmas. More as it develops!



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COVER STORY



PlayStation

32-BIT PALEONTOLOGY: THE EVOLUTION OF THE VIDEO GAME DINOSAUR

This summer, Universal Pictures will be bringing you an almost sure-fire hit movie: *The Lost World*, the sequel to the highly successful blockbuster motion picture *Jurassic Park*. At about the same time, DreamWorks Interactive will be bringing you (what they hope will be) a blockbuster hit as well, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* for the PlayStation.

This ambitious action game has players taking on the roles of five different characters: a compsognathus ("compy" for short, a chicken-size predator that will appear in the new movie in herds of hundreds), a velociraptor (a "raptor," seen in the first movie), a tyrannosaurus rex ("T-rex"—you know what they are) and a couple

of humans (like you and me, except armed with nerve gas, tazers and incendiary grenades). You will take these characters through 24 different environments and battle the carnivorous inhabitants of *The Lost World*.

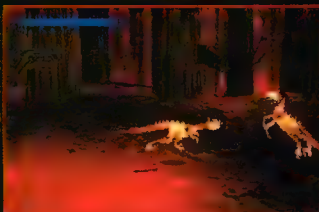
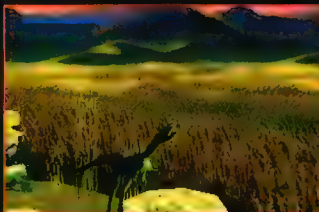
But what about it makes it an ambitious game? DreamWorks Interactive is striving for new heights in graphics and animation in a video game (sounds worthy of an Oscar nomination, doesn't it?). Never before has anyone seen game animation this real and lifelike; this is the closest thing you'll see to realistic dinosaur movements until game developers figure out how to motion capture actual dinosaurs.

EGM showed you exclusive first-looks of this incredible-looking title back in the February issue. Now we'll take you behind the scenes at DreamWorks to see exactly what they're trying to impress us. You'll see how a scene in a game starts out as an idea on paper and evolves into what you see on your television screen.

But no matter how good the game looks, we all know that graphics can supplement—but never take the place of—good gameplay and raw fun. So keep an eye out for a future issue of *EGM* for a follow-up to *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*. We'll give you all the unbiased information you'll need to know on this hot new PlayStation game.

SEGA'S SLOWER EVOLUTION

So where is the Sega Saturn version during all of this? The DreamWorks team did not want to divide their resources among several projects, so they're shipping their source codes over to Sega (currently, no plans for a Nintendo 64 version are being made). Sega is working with Appaloosa Interactive, and together they are taking the original code (along with some of the PlayStation code), adding some original Saturn-specific programming and creating what should also be a stellar version of *The Lost World*. Early indications show that the Saturn version should look at least as good as the PlayStation one. Since the game is primarily composed of 2-D play, the Saturn may actually have an edge when it comes to drawing the lush backgrounds. Because Sega has to wait to get codes from—and have every step of the project approved by—DreamWorks, consumers won't see the Saturn version until at least a few weeks after the PlayStation version is completed.



SATURN SCREENS

BRAHMA Force™

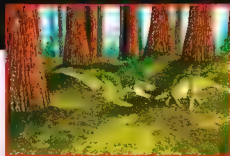
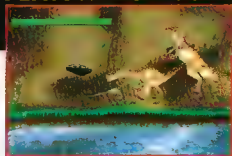
The Assault on Beltlogger 9



COMING SOON TO PLAYSTATION

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PLAYSTATION SCREENS



STEP 1



Catherine Yuh
Storyboard Artist



In the beginning, meetings are held and ideas are tossed on the table. Patrick Gilmore, the producer of *The Lost World*, organizes his team and gets the initial outline of the game down. It is then Catherine Yuh's responsibility to envision these ideas (all the environments, conflicts and action) and make a physical representation of them in the form of hundreds of sketches.

STEP 2



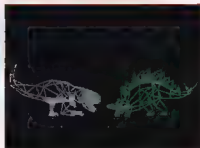
Matt Hall
Lead Texture and 2-D Artist

Matt Hall is responsible for creating the basic blueprints (the basic character design) of *The Lost World*'s vicious dinosaurs. All of his designs are based on the actual original dinosaur models from Stan Winston Studios (which is Hollywood's premier creature effects shop; Stan Winston Studios created the awesome *Terminator* cyborgs, the aliens from the *Alien* movies and the dinosaurs for both the old and the new *Jurassic Park* films). Hall paints the dinosaurs (including their skin textures and color schemes) on DreamWorks' powerful PCs.

STEP 3



Corey Comstock
Lead Animator



Corey Comstock has to build a polygonal model of each character. He also has to develop a list of animations for each character. It is Comstock's responsibility to make sure each character's motions give it the sought-after personality. He also has to design how the characters will physically interact with one another in *The Lost World*.

STEP 4



Tim Goodwin
Animator



Tim Goodwin finishes up the models by applying the textures to the polygons. He then applies mesh modifiers to the model. During animation, Goodwin actually moves the modifiers, not the polygonal geometry itself, to create movement for the characters. What this translates into is a smooth-moving dinosaur that is completely covered in a stretchable skin (you can't see the polygon seams at all). Goodwin then uses a tool written by Tom McDevitt (of Step 5's fame) to convert the finished animation into a file format that the PlayStation can run.

STEP 5



Tom McDevitt
Engineer



Tom McDevitt is the engineer who's responsible for writing each creature's artificial intelligence (AI). McDevitt's code tells each character what animation it will use when walking around, attacking, dodging, eating, etc. All of the dinosaurs in the game do not follow a set sequence of animations. At any time, the AI allows them to choose from a multitude of actions, suitable for every situation in the game. The dinosaurs can stalk, hunt, react to and pursue the main player through extended areas of the game.

STEP 6



Dmitri Ellingson
Background Artist



All while steps 2 through 5 are going on, background artist Dmitri Ellingson is busy creating *The Lost World*'s environments. What you see in the picture above is the initial layout of the first level, the conifer forest level. Ellingson bases his 3-D background environment on level designer Randy Oyler's gamefield plans. The final step of the background process is to apply textures and a backdrop to the maps, adding light sources and shadows to create the immersive feeling of being in woodland (in this level, Ellingson has to add filtered sunlight that shines through the branches).

STEP 7



Matt Brown
Lead Engineer

Finally, lead engineer Matt Brown integrates the converted animation and the AI with his proprietary 3-D game engine, Morf-X. This game engine renders the dinosaurs in realtime ("on the fly") and

allows them to switch from one animation to another, with seamless transitions. In game terms, this may mean that a dinosaur can move instantly from an eating pose to jumping to attacking, all without having to pass through a neutral stance (since every animation is always immediately available). Naturally, you'll have to see it in motion to fully comprehend, or appreciate, what the Morf-X engine is capable of.

Waiting on the Final Exam

So there you have it, *EGM*'s 32-Bit paleontology lesson for the day. What this article doesn't show you is how much blood and sweat these game developers are putting into everything we've shown. They are working day and night to shoot for a PlayStation release date that will coincide with the motion picture's release. Make sure to watch *EGM* to see whether their hard work pays off...or not.

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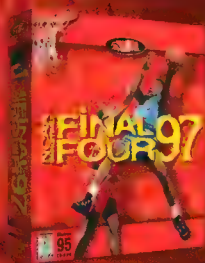
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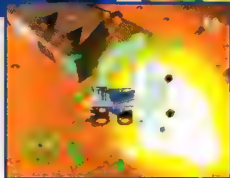
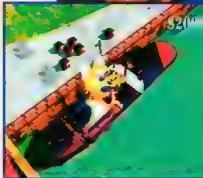
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N64



BLAST CORPS

Cranes, Trains And Automobiles

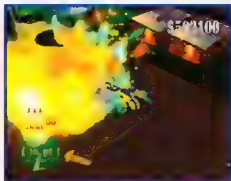
Isn't it ironic, don't you think, that the only way to save the world in Blast Corps is to destroy it? But irony isn't the only thing this relatively unhyped hybrid of puzzle and action game has going for it. The 64-Meg cart—developed by England-based Rare (of Killer Instinct and Donkey Kong Country fame)—packs plenty of gameplay variety.

First and foremost, this sucker is big—60 levels big, in fact. The goal of most levels is pretty simple: Use a variety of vehicles to demolish everything in the path of a runaway, bomb-carrying truck. Other levels—the bonus stages (see sidebar)—have you zipping through hilly race courses; destroying a set number of buildings or collecting the scattered Radiation Detection Units, Blast Corps'

equivalent of Mario stars.

Blast Corps' premise is more than a little offbeat. Apparently, Earth's top eggheads have decided that the best way to rid the planet of its nuclear arsenal is to transport the nukes across the country in an unmanned carrier. Unfortunately, the carrier's cruise control has gone haywire, and the big red rig is rolling steadily onward, unstoppable and out of control. If the plodding carrier should knock into any buildings, its megaton payload will make a very big boom. So it's your job—as a member of the Blast Corps—to clear a path for the carrier, from one end of the level to another.

Lucky for you, the Blast Corps



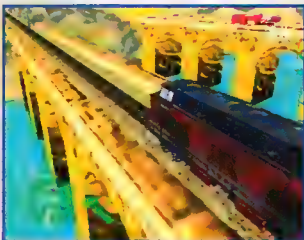
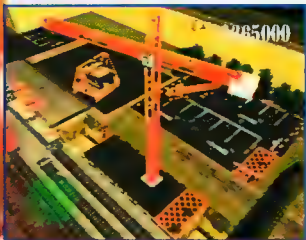
has access to some very cool vehicles (12 in all) to make your building-bashing business easier. You start the game with a bulldozer, which'll topple most structures if you slam against them long enough. And scattered throughout the levels you'll find the other, more specialized



smashing machines (see sidebar for a closer look).

Most of these vehicles are hidden, making Blast Corps a game of exploration as well as demolition. Fortunately, once you clear a path for the carrier and complete a level, you can go back in and explore it at your leisure. You'll

"This sucker is big--60 levels big, in fact."



Aside from vehicles, you'll also find cranes, trains and ships that'll carry you from point A to B.

Close call, man! One second more and the carrier would've hit that building you just demolished!

Trains takin' you on scenic rides through the countryside—at least until you blow everything up!

BONUS STAGE



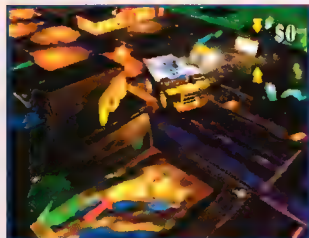
Death from above! Use the dune buggy's turbo to leap onto buildings.



The motorcycle's missiles let you blast structures from afar.



Most levels have at least one radar dish. Find it to open a bonus level.



Your score is measured in dollars' worth of damage. Right now you're broke, so get smashing!

landscapes (you'll roll through country, city, seaside and suburban locales) look fantastic and possess an especially convincing sense of depth. You can pan your view around your vehicle Mario 64-style, as well as zoom in and out. But what'll really blow away gamers are the explosions. Everything in Blast Corps blows up real nice, filling the screen

power slide into structures. Some buildings only topple after you shove a crate of explosives next to them, and you have to ration these crates to last the entire level. Other levels are home to ships, trains and cranes you'll use to haul your vehicles between points A and B. Sometimes you'll even need to fill holes that lie in the carrier's path, thus saving the big rig from a disastrous, explosive tumble.

Above all, Blast Corps keeps you on the move—and on the edge of your seat. The suspense

Anyone who has played the Donkey Kong Country games knows that Rare has a thing for hidden levels—and Blast Corps certainly has its fair share of them. Bonus stages open when you earn gold medals in the regular stages (by destroying all the buildings, rescuing civilians and collecting all the radiation detection units).

Certain bonus levels open only after you find the radar dishes that lie hidden in each stage. But the coolest level opens once you rescue the six hidden scientists that are scattered throughout the game. This level is set on the moon, where the decreased gravity makes for some interesting vehicle physics.

Most bonus stages have you racing on a closed course or destroying so many buildings (one even has you clearing a landing path for the Space Shuttle!). Complete a bonus stage and—you guessed it—another hidden level will open.

also want to collect all the Radiation Detection Units, destroy all the buildings and rescue all the people in each level, too. Completing all these tasks will earn you a gold medal, which turn opens more levels.

Graphically speaking, Blast Corps is just as pretty as Rare's other releases. The 3-D

with balls of incandescent fire as you crunch and slide through city blocks and farm houses.

There's more to Blast Corps, however, than Die Hard-inspired fireballs. Each level is a puzzle of sorts, each vehicle a tool with different strengths and weaknesses. The dump truck, for instance, is most effective when you

generated by the carrier as it rumbles across the antialiased landscape is intense. Judging by the reactions of EGM staff members, you'll rock in your seat, scream at the TV and swear in frustration as the rig rolls closer and closer to a building. But you'll have a heck of a lot of fun while doing it. ■

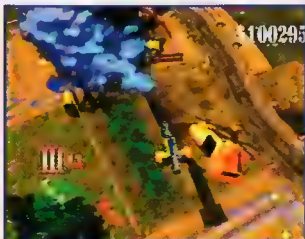
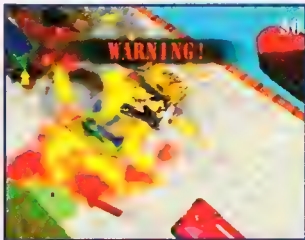
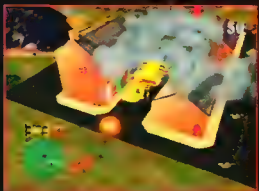
"Everything in Blast Corps blows up real nice."

Gamer's EDGE

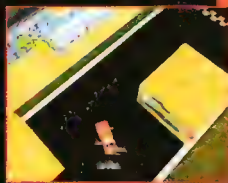
Not your Father's Bulldozer

Blast Corps' bulldozer not exciting enough for you? Don't worry—soon enough you'll trade it in for more powerful, and often more bizarre, vehicles. Scattered throughout the game are 11 other smashing machines, including a dump truck, van, dune buggy, missile-launching motorcycle, three cars (which are perfect for the racing levels), three robots and a massive truck named Sideswipe, whose side-mounted battering rams rip into nearby buildings.

Most vehicles have a special power. For instance, the dune buggy packs turbo speed, the dump truck can power slide into structures and the gold robot will tumble and flip into buildings. You'll only find a few new vehicles in each level (and often just one). But once you find a vehicle, it becomes available for use in bonus levels.

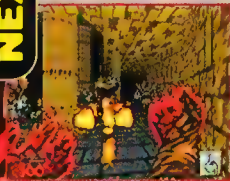
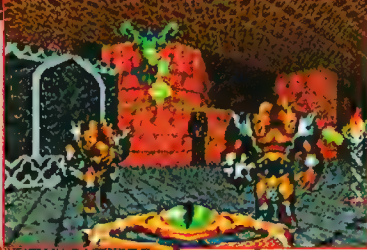


The rescue helicopter will circle above, looking for panicked citizens to pluck from the landscape.



PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Rare
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% DONE	90%
RELEASE DATE	March
ALSO ON	None

N64



HEXEN

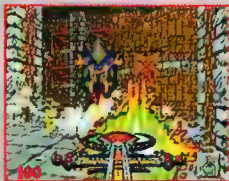
Doom Takes A Medieval Trip

First-person shooters can come and go, but who can argue that it was id Software's games (the Doom series) that paved the way for others

to follow? Hexen is one of those games. Utilizing the Doom engine on the PC, Hexen brought new features and characteristics to the genre. Now, the game will be treated to a nice facelift, courtesy of the Nintendo 64's excellent hardware capabilities.

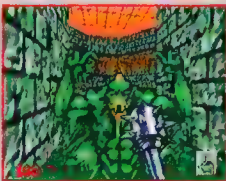
Hexen is no ordinary Doom clone. You won't find shotguns, rocket launchers or chain guns here. Hexen takes place in a fantasy, medieval setting, where cold steel and powerful magic separate the strong from the weak. Your adventures will take you through ancient castles and dark dungeons. You will meet demons, wizards and other mystical creatures that may make Hexen look more like a fantasy role-playing adventure than a first-person shooter.

When you start the game, you



will be given a choice of what character you would like to play as. Your decision will affect several factors, from how much damage you can take and inflict to what weapons and artifacts you'll be able to utilize. You can choose a warrior (a stereotypical strong, but slow fighter), a mage (a physically weak, but magically powerful character) or a cleric (a happy medium between the other two).

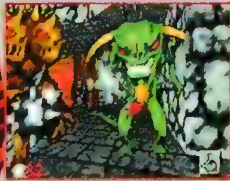
Each class has its own unique set of items to use throughout the game. This may help replay value tremendously. For example, the initial weapon that each player starts with will be either a pair of



steel-gloved fists (warrior), a magical staff that offers a weak-ranged attack (mage) or a spiked mace (cleric). All of the stronger weapons to be found later in the game are also unique to each character class.

To make things even more interesting, common items have different effects, depending on which character is using it. The green potion, for example, can be an explosive concoction in the hands of the warrior, or can be dropped to form a floating poisonous gas cloud when used by the cleric.

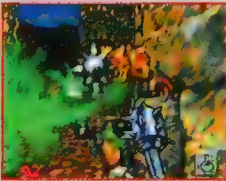
Little changes like these help



In previous versions of Hexen, enemies this close would look rather pixelated...



...now, thanks to the Nintendo 64's new graphics engine, they just look blurry.



In narrow spaces, the poisonous cloud can backfire as an offensive weapon.

Gamer's EDGE

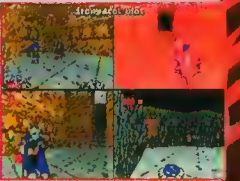
So does four-player death-matching work on a single TV screen? After all, knowing where your opponents are can defeat the whole purpose of death-matching in the first place (which is the reason why Midway isn't planning on including a Multiplayer Mode in Doom 64). But why not include it? The N64 easily supports it, and any Doom-type game certainly warrants it.

The action can get fast and furious. Make sure to pick up power-ups and new weapons as soon as possible. The only thing you will have to keep in mind is that you can't pick up every weapon you see. As we mentioned in the article, certain weapons are for specific classes only.



make Hexen a much more interesting experience than you get with the average Doom game. Add to this a Four-player Split-Screen Mode (see sidebar) plus the N64's graphical prowess, and you have an aging game that may be worth looking at again. ■

PUBLISHER	GT Interactive
DEVELOPER	Software Creations
THEME	First-person Shooter
PLAYERS	1-4 Simultaneous
% DONE	75%
RELEASE DATE	June
ALSO ON	Saturn/PlayStation



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DIE HARD ARCADE

Call In The Special Forces

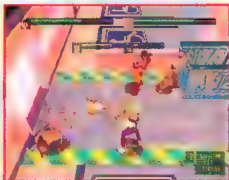
Side-scrolling fighters have all but disappeared from arcades and home systems, replaced by droves of arena fighting games like *Virtua Fighter*. However, Sega has come to the rescue, filling the dormant genre with their conversion of *Die Hard* Arcade. The game takes the tried-and-true formula of Capcom's *Final Fight* and Sega's own *Streets of Rage* trilogy and brings them to the next level. Using polygon characters and rooms, *Die Hard* Arcade looks more like *Virtua Fighter* than games of old.

Die Hard Arcade was easy to port to the Saturn, having used Sega's Titan board in the arcade. Titan hardware is identical to that of the Saturn minus the CD-ROM, so the game is

almost a perfect port of the arcade. The only noticeable difference is the load time between areas and during cinemas.

The plot of *Die Hard* Arcade has very little connection to the movies, other than the title. In Japanese arcades, the game was released as *Dynamite Deka*. For the U.S. and the Japanese Saturn release, the game was retitled adding the movie license.

On New Year's Eve, a group of terrorists seize control of a San Francisco skyscraper, taking 30 partygoers hostage. One of the hostages happens to be the daughter of the president. The terrorists have managed to fend off police attempts to enter the building. As a member of a special SWAT force, you get dropped off on the roof of the building. Slowly working your way to the terrorists'



HQ, you have to fight off the cronies sent to eliminate you. A friend can join in the action as a second SWAT member.

The gameplay is similar to that of other side-scrolling fighters. Each room you enter is filled with baddies and their arsenal of weapons. Besides standard punches and kicks, you can use special attacks that are activated by controller combinations, similar to those of fighting games like

In addition to the action of the regular game, Sega has thrown in an extra game called *Deep Scan*. Available at the Title Screen, playing *Deep Scan* will award you with more credits than the standard four. By blasting submarines, you gain points. Numbers on each sub times 10 determines how many points you're awarded.

Additionally, each sub you destroy puts 50 points in the "bonus" pot. After playing for a while, you'll see a red sub skim across the bottom of the screen. If you're lucky enough to hit it, you'll be awarded the bonus points and a bunch of extra credits.



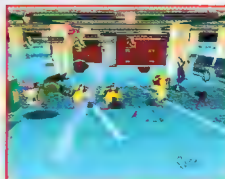
Virtua Fighter. Most enemies have weapons, which they drop when you attack. Along the way, you'll find pistols, rocket launchers, spray cans, axes, golf clubs, pipes, machine guns and more. Fighting takes place on a 2-D plane, so you have to be in front of or behind an enemy to attack.

There are cut scenes between areas, which update you on the status of the president's daughter (who has very large hands), or follow our hero(es) to the next area. During the cut scenes, there are times where you'll have to punch, kick, or move out of the way from obstacles. Success gives you a chance to determine the game's ending and path. For instance, by pressing the right button at the right time, you may avoid a battle altogether.

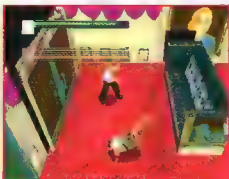
Die Hard is a return to the tried-and-true genre of side-scrolling fighters. Fans of the genre will want to grab a friend and take on *Die Hard* Arcade. ■



Success or failure during cut scenes determines the game's ending.



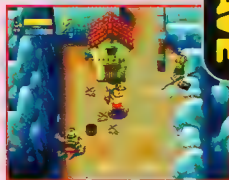
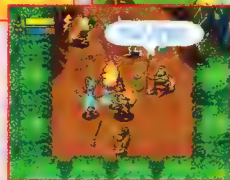
These firemen are in the business of putting you out, for good.



At the heart of bad guy HQ, you'll fight the leader of the gang.

PUBLISHER	Sega
DEVELOPER	Sega of America
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% DONE	100%
RELEASE DATE	March
ALSO ON	None

SATURN



Herc's ADVENTURES

Get Pumped Up With Herc

A

ttention, everyone! Thanks to LucasArts, you can now battle through ancient Greece and interact with the gods who watched over everyone.

Wait, don't turn the page yet! Despite the premise, this Herc's Adventures is not an educational title. Instead, it's a hilarious adventure game where you must fight your way through a twisted version of the classic Greek mythological world.

In the game, Hades (head god Zeus' brother and lord of the Underworld), has kidnapped Persephone, the goddess of fertility. Without Persephone's powers, all of Greece will wither and die. Zeus has recruited you to seek out Hades and save Persephone.

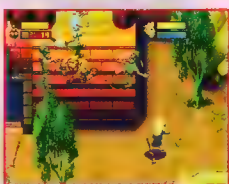
While the name of the game is Herc's Adventures, legendary strongman Hercules is not the only character you can play as. There is also Atlanta, the speedy gal with the bow and arrow and Jason, the plucky, young lad who

fights with a sword and sling.

Each character has his or her own attributes. For instance, Atlanta may be fast, and her arrows may have great range, but she is unable to pick up huge boulders like the mighty Hercules.

The game itself is incredibly fun. The gameplay as well as the overhead perspective is reminiscent of the classic 16-Bit LucasArts game, *Zombies Eat My Neighbors*. Like *Zombies*, there are a ton of special weapons and two people can play simultaneously to tag-team the enemies.

During your quest to defeat Hades, you will meet numerous other gods from Greek mythology. In order to advance in the game, you will need to assist these gods by finding items or other such jobs in order to gain their approval. Eventually, you will gain



access to the Underworld.

A quicker way to get to the Underworld is to die. When you lose all your energy, your character will die a comical death (with kicking legs and everything), and awake in the Underworld. From here, you need to fight your way past undead skeletons to the proverbial "white light" to gain access back to the surface world.

Speaking of comical, this game

PUBLISHER	LucasArts
DEVELOPER	LucasArts
THEME	Adventure
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% DONE	90%
RELEASE DATE	April
ALSO ON	PlayStation

is a riot! Between enemy guards running around in their boxer shorts to Herc proudly declaring, "My dad's a god!" every chance he gets, this game sometimes has you laughing too hard to fight.

You don't see quality 2-D games like this on the next-generation systems that often. With all the action, humor and great animation, Herc's Adventures is one game that you can't myth (sorry, it had to be said). ■

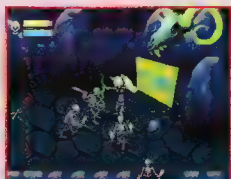
"...this game...has you laughing too hard to fight."



Use the catapults to launch yourself out of (or into) danger.



See? Aliens really did help build all those pyramids in Egypt.

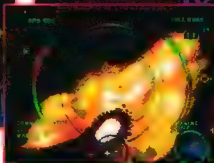


After you die, fight through the Underworld to regain your life.



Hop aboard a ship to get a free ride across the sea.

PLAYSTATION



WING COMMANDER IV

The Movie That Plays Like A Game

Aside from the spectacular 3DO version of Wing Commander III, the console incarnations of Origin's signature space-combat series have been nothing for gamers to pee their pants over. Yet Electronic Arts' nearly complete PlayStation version of Wing Commander IV may finally turn console gamers on to the series. Unlike Wing III, the fourth chapter is not a direct port; it has a new look, accurate collision detection and—perhaps best of all—simplified control. Story wise, the game picks up two years after Wing III. The warlike Kilrathi race who dogged humanity in the previous games has been vanquished, and now the galaxy is on the brink of civil war between the Confederation and the Border Worlds. Players again assume the

role of war hero Christopher Blair, who must eventually pick a side in the looming war. Will he stick with Confed? Or will he jump ship and aid the Border Worlds' cause?

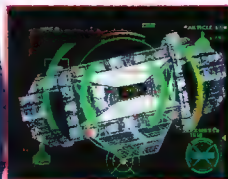
Wing IV offers 50 missions in all, which range from simple patrols to assaults on enormous capital ships. Blair's decisions during the missions—and especially during the movie sequences—determine which sorties he'll fly. The planet-based missions of the PC version have been replaced, however, and now all of Wing IV's missions are set in space.

The game packs seven different fighters, and the type of ship you can fly depends on which side of the war Blair joins. The ships' cockpit displays are different from the computer game's HUDs, making them easier to read in the lower resolution of the PlayStation game.

PUBLISHER	Origin
DEVELOPER	Origin
THEME	Simulation
PLAYERS	1
% DONE	75%
RELEASE DATE	April
ALSO ON	None

Also new is a simplified control option, which automatically handles certain functions for the player in the heat of battle. Target a capital ship, for example, and your fighter will switch from guns to torpedoes. Better still, Wing IV is compatible with Sony's dual stick analog controller. Couple this hefty peripheral with a Dolby Surround Sound system and the Wing Commander experience becomes authentic enough to satisfy even die-hard PC purists. ■

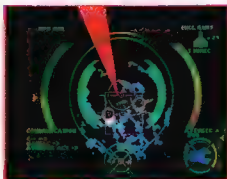
**"The game...has a new look
...and simplified control."**



Congratulations—you made it home in one piece. Now land on the carrier.

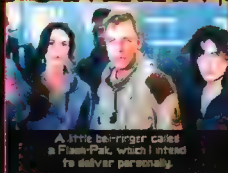


Okay. It's your little fighter against an enemy carrier. You gotta love those odds.



Pour it on! An enemy's weakening shields flicker under your onslaught.

Behind the SCREENS



A little blarney called a Fawn-Pak, which I intend to deliver personally.

Sure, Wing Commander IV's space battles are spiffy, but the real stars of this sci-fi epic are, well, its stars—and the \$9 million movie in which they act out the game's galaxy-spanning tale. The game features several A-list and B-list actors, including *Star Wars* boy Mark Hamill, who reprises his Wing III role of Colonel Christopher Blair, the player's surrogate, and perennial bad guy Malcolm McDowell.

And Wing IV's four CDs' worth of FMV isn't of the cheesy, straight-to-video



variety gamers are used to seeing. In fact, the Wing IV "movie" was filmed like an authentic Hollywood fic, with real sets and props. And the scenes were shot on film rather than video (Wing III's cinematics, although impressive, relied heavily on computer-generated sets and were taped on video).

A few scenes had to be removed from the PlayStation version of Wing IV to cut the game down to four discs. But Electronic Arts assures that only minor cinematics were cut (such as Blair's boring walks through hallways), and the bulk of the blockbuster video remains.



What you see before you, Colonel Blair.

K-1

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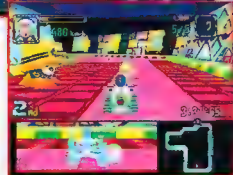
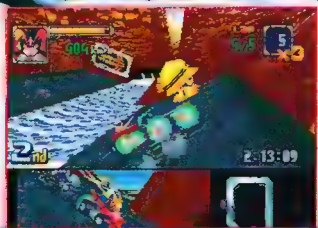
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PLAYSTATION



MEGA MAN BATTLE & CHASE

The Blue Guy Hits The Highway

M

ega Man has spent the past 10 years battling Dr. Wily and his legions of robotic henchmen. Let's face it, after doing the same thing for so

long, even Mega Man needs a break. A few years back, he even played soccer against Wily's 'bots. Now, Mega Man, his friends and his foes are taking their conflicts to the race track in Mega Man Battle & Chase.

There are a total of 10 characters playable in the game. Each one is riding in a vehicle that reflects his or her personality. For instance, Mega Man rides in his robo-dog Rush, who apparently can now transform into a race car.

There are three modes available to play in. The Grand Prix Mode



Between the fog and the giant Mets, there's a ton of obstacles.

Man and his pals certainly didn't forget to bring theirs along.

During each race, there is a weapon meter that automatically charges itself up. The weapons vary depending on your choice of character. Mega Man, Bass and Protoman all have the standard Mega Buster weapon, while



Mix and match stolen parts to make your own custom car.

range from a spinning shield to an electric shock.

The best feature of Battle & Chase is the ability to steal parts of your opponent's car after you defeat them. Going back and repeating races allows you to gain multiple parts and create your own custom car.

Dare To COMPARE

Mega Man and Mario have both been hitting the road lately. Both Battle & Chase and Mario Kart 64 are excellent, but they have their pluses and minuses. Mario's graphics look much better, thanks to the N64's anti-aliasing power. Mario also has a few more available tracks. Battle & Chase has the character advantage with 10 playable racers as opposed to Mario's eight. Also, the ability to customize your car in Battle & Chase adds an important element of strategy to the game.

"...create your own custom car."

is the primary mode where you choose a character and challenge all the other racers in an attempt to beat all the tracks. The Time Attack Mode allows you to challenge yourself by trying to beat your quickest time on each of the tracks. The final mode is the Versus Mode. Here, you challenge a friend in a split-screen race to the finish. While you have a full arsenal of weapons at your disposal, this is played like a normal race instead of like Mario Kart 64's Battle Mode.

Speaking of weapons, Mega

Gutsman tosses giant rocks. Others are more unique such as Quick Man's speed burst and Roll's jumping ability.

In addition to the standard weapons, there are also special weapons that can be earned and exploited. To gain a special weapon, you need to collect the traffic cones and Mets that are scattered on the courses. When you collect the necessary amount of items (a meter is shown on the screen), you'll earn a random weapon which can be fired at will. The special weapons

Mega Man Battle & Chase is a change from the normal Mega Man games. Still, it is fun to play and a definite change of pace from the usual racing game. ■

PUBLISHER	Capcom
DEVELOPER	Capcom of Japan
THEME	Racing
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% DONE	60%
RELEASE DATE	April
ALSO ON	None



Gamer's EDGE

PLAYSTATION

NEXT WAVE

There is a grand total of 32 playable characters in Toshinden 3. Just so you know who you are up against, here's the mug shots of all the fighters and the sub-Bosses they'll have to face.



TOSHINDEN 3

Round Three Of The Hit Series

When the PlayStation was first released, one of the games that helped to sell the system was

Battle Arena Toshinden. Now, only about a year and a half later, the third Toshinden game is making its debut on Sony's polygon-pushing machine.

When the second game was released, many complained that it didn't add enough to the series other than a few new characters. It seems as though the creators have been listening, because there are ample new features to keep fans of the series happy.

The most noticeable new feature is the incredible number of playable characters. There are a whopping 32 characters to choose from, if you are skilled enough to learn them all. Like the PlayStation's other big 3-D fighting series Tekken, beating the game with different characters allows you to play as a particular sub-Boss. The sub-Bosses are all variations

of their main opponent. For instance, Sofia's sub-Boss is Zola, another whip-wielding vixen who dresses like Cat Woman and Kayin's double Ten Count who looks and moves like Michael Jackson.

In addition to all the sub-Bosses, there are new "regular" players as well. Shizuku is a graceful female fighter who bears more than a passing resemblance to Aoi from Virtua Fighter 3, and Nagisa looks like he can compete with Vermilion with his giant gun. All the action takes place in enclosed arenas, where you can slam your opponents up against the walls for some wild-looking juggle moves. Another cool feature about the walled arenas is that if you are thrown into a wall, you can rebound yourself off of it to counterattack your enemy.

The addition of the new "Soul Bomb" attack will really help you

pull off the juggle combos. They are a type of super move that cause tremendous damage as well as a rather impressive light show. Other flashy moves such as the Overdrive and Desperation moves return from the older games.

Graphically, the game looks great. There are two graphic modes available that allow the game to run at either 30 or 60 FPS. If you choose to run the game in the 60 Frames Per Second Mode, there is a loss of texture maps and background detail, but the game moves incredibly fast. Even in the 30 FPS Mode, the game runs smoothly.

While Battle Arena Toshinden 3 may not be the most strategic fighting game on the market, it is still a ton of fun. The incredible number of unique characters, hidden secrets and expansive plot line keep this series fresh even after three games. ■

"...ample new features to keep fans...happy."

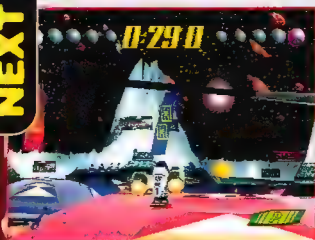


PUBLISHER	Playmates
DEVELOPER	Takara
THEME	Fighting
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% DONE	85%
RELEASE DATE	May
ALSO ON	None



- ELIJAH
- KAYIN
- ELLIS
- GAIA
- SOFIA
- TRACY
- BAYHOU
- MONDO
- RUNGO
- DUKE
- CHAOS
- NAGISA
- DAVID
- SHIZUKU
- SHO
- VEIL
- LEON
- TEN COUNT
- ATAHUA
- TAU
- ZOLA
- RACHAEL
- CULLING
- TOUJIN
- ADAM
- BALGA
- SCHULTZ
- VERMILION
- JUDGEMENT
- MISS TIL
- ABEL
- NARU

PLAYSTATION



BallBlazer CHAMPIONS

Shoot And Score With This Updated Classic

Any old-school gamer worth his or her weight in Commodore 64 joysticks can't help but remember BallBlazer, LucasArts'

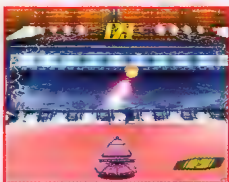
1985 8-Bit computer hit that combined speed, two-player thrills and brilliant gameplay into one incredibly fun package. Now LucasArts is unleashing a 32-Bit update to the classic, and—nostalgic gamers have no fear—BallBlazer Champions stays true to the original.

For the uninitiated, BallBlazer is a futuristic, soccer-inspired arena romp in which two hovercraft take pot shots on each other's goal with a blazing ball (hence the game's name). But here's the catch—each craft has a certain amount of energy that begins to drain once players nab the ball. Since this energy



Your enemy can use power-ups (like this missile) against you as well.

supply keeps the craft going at top speed and lets it perform turbo boosts, the player carrying the ball is at a distinct disadvantage. The other player can easily zoom up and swipe the ball. One of the most common—and risky—strategies, therefore, is to continually launch the ball in front of you before it can sap too much energy. This tactic lets



As if reaching the goal isn't hard enough, most goals move, too!

and destabilization zones, which knock your control systems haywire. The game packs eight different hovercraft, and some vehicles are better in certain arenas than others. The bird craft, for example, does well in ramp-rich arenas.

Scattered throughout each arena are power-ups—including mines, missiles and cloaking devices—that'll even the odds. Of



Check out the billboards in the arenas. Most plug LucasArts-related stuff.



"You can always take the low-tech approach and ram into the ball carrier."



ball carriers move at top speeds, but it makes it easier for opponents to score a turnover.

Making things even more interesting are the arenas themselves. BallBlazer Champions offers 12 stadiums, only one of which resembles a regular sports arena. The rest are filled with hills, platforms, ramps, energy-replenishing and energy-sapping zones

course, you could take the low-tech approach and ram the ball carrier to knock the ball free.

BallBlazer offers three modes of play: Single Match, Tournament (which lets you upgrade between matches) and a Split-Screen Two-player Mode. It is the Two-player Mode that'll keep gamers playing long after they've earned the title of MasterBlazer. ■

PUBLISHER	LucasArts
DEVELOPER	LucasArts
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% DONE	90%
RELEASE DATE	April
ALSO ON	None

PLAYSTATION



WILD ARMS

A Couple Of Wild And Crazy Arms

Fans of RPGs (specifically on the Sony PS) may want to keep an eye out for Wild Arms (imagine Lufia done on the PlayStation with enhancements).

Wild Arms takes place in Filgaia, a world once filled with lush, green forests. Unfortunately there was a war against demons 1,000 years ago that sapped power away from the guardians of the great land. The demons were beaten away, but the land turned into a harsh desert and the morale of the people declined. Now Filgaia doesn't possess the high technology it once did, and the demons are slowly making a comeback.

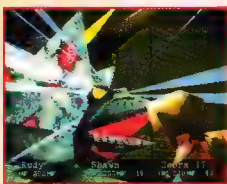
Although Wild Arms doesn't



The battle system is reminiscent of a Final Fantasy VII-style interface.

have anything directly in common with Lufia as far as its story goes, it does feature certain characteristics that make it similar to the 16-Bit RPG. For instance, Lufia's overhead map allowed gamers to travel from city to city (or dungeon to dungeon). Wild Arms allows gamers to do this on a map that's very much like the one from Lufia, except the Wild Arms one is graphically more impressive.

Of course, many will be wondering if Wild Arms is so much like Lufia, why was it done on the PlayStation. Yet Wild Arms features 3-D battle sequences and graphics and sound that are



Visuals improve greatly when you come across a major enemy.

much better than anything the Super NES could do.

The character plots are pretty standard, involving three heroes brought together to save their world. Each character has his/her own destiny and technique. This may sound ruin of the mill, but Wild Arms definitely has some interesting features, including the ability to assemble magic using items; overlapping, overhead screens (similar to parallax scrolling); great-looking 3-D sequences and many others.

The 3-D battle sequences are similar to those in FFVII. But unlike FFVII, they're not in real-time. Although the sequences are turn-based, they're done in a random fashion in that sometimes enemies may get an extra hit if they're enraged or the main character may get the jump on the enemy and get a more powerful attack. It'll be the jobs of gamers to battle the demons once again and make sure they don't take away what's left of Filgaia. ■

Gamer's EDGE

Wild Arms has a huge cast of characters. Not all of them are important though.

The characters in the game who are important are the three main ones. Actually, there's kind of like three and half. They include:

Rudy Roughnight

This guy is the main character of the entire game. He's a traveler looking for adventure. He is young but has huge potential. More than likely he will become a great warrior.

Jack Van Bureac

A treasure hunter who never passes up the chance to find some goodies in ancient ruins. He's in search of a weapon known as the "Absolute Power."

Cecilia Lynn Adelhyde

She is a princess of a kingdom that once was. Her magic ability is great—because of that she can talk with the ancient guardians of Filgaia.

Hanpan

This is why there's three and a half main characters. This little guy is Jack's rat. He is mystical and can speak. His knowledge assists the entire party.

PUBLISHER	SCEA
DEVELOPER	MediaVision
THEME	RPG
PLAYERS	1
% DONE	20%
RELEASE DATE	April
ALSO ON	None

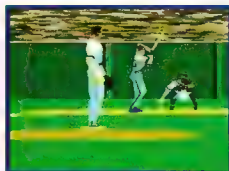
SPORTS

VR Baseball

After a long delay, VR Baseball finally steps up to the plate

Two years in the making, VR Baseball is finally ready to make its debut, appropriately on baseball's opening day, April 1. After such a long, delayed development the question that is begged to be asked is: Was it worth the wait? Interplay thinks so.

Quite a bit has changed since the first incarnation of VR Baseball was shown to the press what seems like decades ago. The most noticeable change is that the graphics are exponentially better than they were a year ago. The rough, low-color 3-D graphics that were used in this game are no more. The players have been redrawn to hide many of their flaws, resulting in a much more realistic baseball player.



A limitless amount of views can be used in VR Baseball although all of the players aren't really completely 3-D. With the "free-float" camera you can view the action from anywhere.



All of the MLB team and player licenses are in VR Baseball.

Additionally, VR Baseball will include all of the new 1997 changes to various team uniforms throughout the league, and there will even be four different uniform styles that include: home, away, practice and "alternate".

The baseball stadiums are also getting an ample amount of attention. VR Sports promises that each field will look identical to the real thing, and the few completed ones that we've seen look promising.

Interplay's sports team pledges that VR Baseball will not only be fun to play, but



The main batting view presents the action nicely. Notice that there are no on-screen batting aids—Interplay feels those would ruin the realism.

that it will satisfy enthusiasts who are interested in the number crunching and statistics that are such a big part of baseball. There will be numerous options available such as the Exhibition, Season, Batting Practice and Home Run Derby Modes. The most interesting feature, however, is being able to play the All-Star game after watching the voting results.

With so many baseball games arriving in the near future, VR Baseball certainly has its work cut out. Interplay, however, seems confident that their title will be a bona fide contender in the pennant race to come.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
PlayStation	April
PUBLISHER	THEME
EA Sports	Baseball
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	75%

NCAA Basketball Final Four 97

Mindscape finally delivers the first PlayStation college basketball game

Few collegiate events generate as much excitement and hysteria as college basketball's Final Four tournament, which makes it surprising that this is the first 32-Bit title to re-create the sport.

Shooting for the hard, realistic elements of a true simulation, Mindscape's Final Four basketball delivers a large and

diverse selection of 64 teams and the basketball arenas they play in. Also included are 20 of the greatest college teams of all time.

For simulation fans, extensive ratings and statistics on both players and teams ranked in the following categories: free-throw percentage, offensive rebounds, defensive rebounds,



"No blood, no foul" Playing in Arcade Mode turns the normally civilized game of basketball into a free-for-all in which players can p.o.v. over anyone while making their way to the hoop.



High Voltage has done their best to re-create all the individual stadiums as realistically as possible including actual team logos.



strength and game aptitude.

Graphically, Final Four is reminiscent of NBA Shoot Out. Three-dimensional polygonal players move realistically using any of the 16 different camera angles. Standard in-game moves include the standard fare: blocking, stealing, jumping and turbo. Taking it to the hoop and jamming it is a pleasure with over 35 dunk animations at your disposal.

Don't look for any outrageous baseline lift-offs or massive over-the-top jams, Final Four sticks to realism and gameplay to carry it through.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	April
PUBLISHER	THEME
Windscape	Basketball
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	3-DO ROM
% DONE	
80%	

NFL Quarterback Club 98

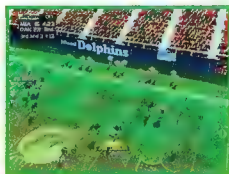
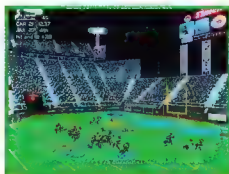
Acclaim looks to the NFL's reigning MVP to propel their football game to the top

With great football titles such as Sony's NFL GameDay and EA's Madden football on the shelves, QB Club has simply been lost in the huddle. Acclaim hopes to shake things

up this summer with NFL Quarterback Club 98, a game that they are boldly touting as "the start of a new dynasty."

Coincidentally, Brett Favre may have started a new dynasty in Green Bay, and he happens to be the big-name player Acclaim has signed to help construct their new game.

Details on gameplay are sketchy at this stage of completion, but we can tell you the types of features and



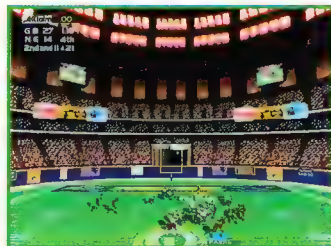
Like other football games, QB Club has a variety of camera angles



Build your team from the ground up with QB Club's drafting feature.


before you even hike the ball shows you how in-depth the gameplay can get if you choose that route.

If QB Club plays as good as it looks, it could deserve a serious look by both action and hardcore football fans alike.



options available—and it is an impressive list.

For starters, you can manage a team by creating, drafting and trading players in addition to signing free-agents and releasing the bad ones. Other features such as creating new teams and being able to script your first 15 plays

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	July
PUBLISHER	THEME
Acclaim	Football
PLAYERS	SIZE
1-4	CD-ROM
% DONE	
N/A	

Triple Play 98

EA Sports hopes to keep their winning streak alive with the follow-up to last year's baseball hit

Don't expect EA Sports' Triple Play 98 to be nothing more than a slightly spruced-up version of last year's game. A major overhaul is under way, beginning with the game engine.

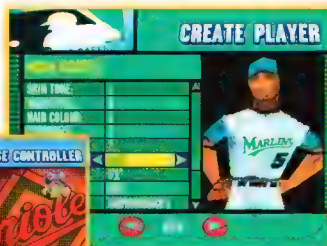
Three-dimensional polygonal players have taken the place of last year's flat looking, "sprite"-based players, giving the game an entirely new look. Polygonal

players will now be rendered on-the-fly, a process which enables on-screen players to appear to move much more fluidly than standard motion-capture, animated players.

In addition, the artificial intelligence has been upgraded to consider new factors such as: "Team Intelligence," (manages a team as it would be managed in real life) and the batting styles of every player along with the pitching preferences of every pitcher.

Other new features this season include: Home Run Derby, Super Pro difficulty setting, Interleague play, Practice Mode and Intelligent Crowds (they leave early if the team is not doing well). The two expansion teams—the Devil Rays and the Diamond Backs—

As with just about every EA Sports game, a comprehensive "Create a Player" feature will be available in Triple Play 98.



are also included this season.

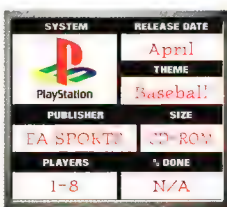
In an effort to make the game feel like a television broadcast, the in-game commentary duties will now be

handled by two commentators instead of only one.

With all the new features and improvements going into this EA baseball game, Triple Play 98 could be the most complex baseball sim to slide onto a 32-Bit platform.



As always, Triple Play will have plenty of authentic stadiums to play in.



Triple Play 97's stadium flybys were terrific. The new one has even more

Need for Speed II

Gamers' thirst for speed still unquenched, EA revs up the sequel to their realistic racer

Hold on racers, this super-charged sequel is shaping up to be every speed freak's best friend.

First and foremost, Need for Speed II will be powered by an entirely new engine, propelling the game 50 percent faster than the original. This is very good news as some versions of this popular racing sim were painfully slow at times (contrary to its title). Also added to the sequel are all-new, faster, more exotic sports cars.

Starting with the fastest production car in the world—the McLaren F1, capable of 231 mph, on down to Ford's new concept car, the 720 horsepower GT90, the selection is large



Far eclipsing the original with its depth and faster gameplay, including several new cars, worlds and tracks, Need for Speed II looks very impressive

and anything but mundane.

As for the atmosphere—that is new as well. Players will drive in a "totally immersive" 3-D world. Within this world resides seven international locations that offer several tracks each. Race the coastline, urban blight, rain

forest or even the jungle, just to name a few.

With a gaggle of new cars, and an incredibly improved graphics engine, Need for Speed II could be your only chance to try some of the cars you can only dream about.



Two-player Mode is a must for a racing sim; of course NIS II has it

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NASCAR RACING Race against real drivers in 1998 cars on 1998 tracks in customized simulation mode or hop-in-and-start-

drive arcade mode. You can behave just like the real thing and the rockin' sound track won't drown out the sounds of squealing tires and roaring engines. **PSX \$46**



DOUBLE DRAGON Billy and Jimmy Lee, return to the city where they grew up. Find it controlled by their gang. They make it their goal to defeat

the leader. Others rise up against the gangs, some to lead wounds rescue loved ones or for the sake of justice, all drawn to Bloody Town by a power they cannot see. **NEO GDC \$49**



'SONIC X-TREME' Move in any direction with full camera rotation. Feel genuine Rhythm as you control a Death-Defying hero that its gravitational pull is sucking up all 5 surrounding worlds. Sonics come to rescue the Mps from each world before they can be destroyed. **SAT \$46**



NBA HANG TIME Soar through the air and slam on home against the top boys. Rock with special moves, burning hoops and high flying double dunks. All 29 NBA teams are represented. **PSX \$24 \$76**



'CONTRA LEGACY OF WAR' A classic action game with an entirely new 3D environment to battle in - city, jungle, alien planets, and more. With four unique playable characters and tons of weaponry including machine guns, homing lasers, rockets, grenades, flamethrowers, bombs and more, your mission is to win the day!

PSX \$46 SAT \$46



'SOUL EDGE' This is a tale of souls and swords, transcending the world and its history. Choose from 10 unique characters with their own weapons and fighting style in amazing 3D, spectacular graphics.

PSX \$46



'ID4' You are in the concept against Earth's deadliest menace. Battle alien attack fighters as you obliterate the City Destroyers deployed overhead by the massive alien mothership. As your miss on progress from city to city you fly faster and more heavily armed planes, until you reach the most dangerous view in a wholesale-punch assault on the mothership.

PSX \$52



'SATURN' The Saturn arrives with major game play, featuring muscle 8 processors, including 3 custom 32 bit Hitachi RISC processors, plus a 16-bit sound board. IT'S OUT THERE! **\$209**



'TIROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER' Prepare yourself for gut wrenching gameplay and terrorizing combat as you, battle raptors, Triceratops, T-Rex and more. Amazing 3D graphics give you realistic and varied special effects along with 360 degree a.m.

Mega \$74



'HEART OF DARKNESS' In the world of dreams, anything is possible. Hears can become full of own terrors. Dark ogies once again come back to life. Enjoy the results of arcade action and adventure.

PSX \$54



'MARVEL SUPER HEROES: WAR OF THE GODS' Choose your favorite Marvel characters and battle. Thins the most dangerous v-n in the Marvel Universe!

PSX \$52 SAT \$52 SNE \$54



'MADDEN 97' Enroll in the exclusive Madden University where tournament tested gameplay comes to life. Take notes while Coach Madden discusses the finer points of the game. With over 100 current, All-time Super Bowl, and secret teams to choose from. Draft your own team from a pool of NFL players or create your very own super-stars. **Gen \$54 PSX \$54 SAT \$54 SNE \$56**

NINTENDO 64		NINTENDO 64		PLAYSTATION		PLAYSTATION		PLAYSTATION		SATURN		SATURN		SATURN		SATURN	
Alien vs Predator	\$64	Street Fighter	\$64	4x4 Gears & Guts	\$51	Final Fantasy 4	\$69	NFL Game Day '97	\$50	4x4 Gears & Guts	\$51	Magic the Gathering	\$50	Tomb Raiders	\$50		
Black & Brat	\$69	Super Mario 64	\$62	ASCI Fighter Stick	\$44	Final Fantasy VII	\$72	NFL QB Club '97	\$39	Andreoli Racing '97	\$49	Marvel Super Heroes	\$52	Ultimate Mort Kombat 3	\$54		
Blat Corps	\$64	Super Mario Kart R	\$69	ASCI Rave Pad	\$26	Formosa 1 Wink Game	\$52	NFL Face Off '97	\$51	Asa 51	\$51	Wachman 2	\$49	Virtua Cop 2	\$54		
ClayFighter	\$66	Telephone	\$45	Allen vs Predator	\$52	GEK	\$42	NHL Hockey '97	\$50	Black Doom	\$52	NBA Live '97	\$49	Virtua Fighter 3	\$54		
Cruis'n USA	\$82	Top Gear Rally	\$72	Allied General	\$50	Game Shark	\$49	PGA Tour '97	\$50	Big Top	\$42	NHL '97	\$52	Virtua Fighter 3	\$54		
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Doom	\$72	Turok Dinosaur Hunter	\$74	Andreoli Racing '97	\$49	Herc's Adventure	\$52	PSX Memory Card Plus \$40	\$49	Castlevania Bloodsting	\$42	NHL Hockey '97	\$50	Wild Series Baseball 2	\$52		
FIFA Int Soccer '96	\$68	Ultra Descent	\$66	Arc the Lad	\$52	Helen	\$52	PSX Muthi Top	\$46	Command & Conquer	\$52	Nights	\$49				
Frank Ray	\$66	Wave Race	\$62	Area 51	\$51	Wave 2	\$46	Power Slave	\$46	Contra Legacy of War	\$46	Nights W3D Pad	\$49				
Golden Eye 007	\$94	Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2	\$76	Beyond the Beyond	\$50	Hyperblade	\$51	Power Mile Pro Wrestling	\$46	Cruis'n USA Remake	\$49	Panzer Dragoon 2	\$56				
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Mad Cat Fight Night	\$40			Castlevania Bloodsting	\$42	Jumping Flash 2	\$49	Rebel Assault 2	\$49	Dr. Heart Trilogy	\$49	Road Pursuit	\$49				
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Mega Man	\$64			Command & Conquer	\$52	Kings Field 2	\$51	Revelations:Persona	\$54	Dragon Force	\$46	Re-Loaded	\$52				
Mission Impossible	\$66			Contra Legacy of War	\$46	Lagacy of Kan	\$46	Sony Ridge Racer Revue	\$44	Duke Nukem 3D	\$52	Road Rats	\$49				
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	\$75			Crash Bandicoot	\$52	Lethal Enforcers 1 & 2	\$43	Sony Playstat on Sys 1	\$49	FIFA Soccer '97	\$49	Romance 3 Kingdoms 4	\$56				
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N4 Arcade	\$42			Crypt Kil n' War	\$69	Madcat Football '97	\$54	Street Fighter Alpha 2	\$52	GoldenEye	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Adapter Shark	\$42			Crypt Kil n' War	\$69	Madcat Football '97	\$54	Street Fighter Alpha 2	\$52	GoldenEye	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Controller	\$42			Dark Forces	\$49	Marvel Super Heroes	\$52	Suikoden	\$46	Heaven	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Fight Force Pro	\$29			Dark Stalkers	\$44	Maxmanor 2	\$49	Tecmo Decept on	\$49	Hyperblade	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Gameshark	\$39			Descent 2	\$52	Micro Machines 2 3D	\$46	Tekken 2	\$44	ID4 Independence Day	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Memory Card Plus \$28	\$28			Destiny Derby 2	\$52	Murphy Truck Rally	\$54	Unleash the Beast	\$52	Incredible Hulk	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 Memory Card	\$19			Duke Nukem 3D	\$54	Mortal Kombat Trilogy	\$52	Unleash the Beast	\$52	Into the Shadow	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
N4 RFL Adapter	\$19			Die Hard Trilogy	\$52	Moto Toon Gran Prix	\$50	Ten Shi Den 2	\$46	King of Fighters '95	\$52	Sacred Pools	\$52				
NBA HANG TIME	\$74			Disruptor X	\$51	Myst	\$50	Tomb Raider	\$50	Legend of Legend	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
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Performace Star Wheel	\$52			Dragonheart	\$42	NASDAQ	\$46	Twisted Metal 2	\$49	Legend of Legend	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
Play Wings 64	\$62			Duke Nukem 3D	\$54	NBA Jam Team Ed	\$48	Warhammer Master Rat	\$50	Legend of Legend	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
Red Baron	\$66			Fl Racing Pool Season	\$52	NBA Jam Team Ed	\$48	Warhammer Master Rat	\$50	Legend of Legend	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
Star Wars Shock Em	\$69			Weapon Lord	\$49	NBA Jam Team Ed	\$48	Warhammer Master Rat	\$50	Legend of Legend	\$54	Sacred Pools	\$52				
Star Wars Shock Em	\$72			X-Women Star str Virus	\$46	Final Doom	\$52	NBA Jam Team Ed	\$48	Warhammer Master Rat	\$50	Legend of Legend	\$54				

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Shipping and handling charges calculated on a per order, per shipment and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed and the "per item" charge is charged once on each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once on each shipment we make to you.
Each United States order will include a 6-month subscription to Computer Games Strategy Plus Magazine, for which \$5.00 of the order cost will be allocated, to begin with the February 1997 issue or later issues depending upon available magazine quantities.

We Also Carry
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Standard	Priority	Over	Ma	Ma	Ma
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advertisement

A PERFECT GAME



players. And with this game's incredibly fluid batting, pitching and fielding controls, every one of

these guys plays as well as they (and you) possibly could. The stat-based performance is clearly evident -- players who homer regularly in their careers keep up the pace, while every bona fide superstar plays with the skills they bring to the real game. Every pitcher has his own unique armory of pitches, again corresponding to their real style -- a nice touch.



Play by play from
Jon Miller

Acclaim has been very busy in the off season with **ALL-STAR BASEBALL '97** **FEATURING FRANK THOMAS** and it looks like they've got the front-runner in the baseball game pennant race. It's the game you've been dreaming about: all 28 teams play in the immaculately rendered sights and sounds of the greatest stadiums in the league -- from Wrigley to Fenway to Comiskey, they're all here -- complete with star announcer Jon Miller doing play-by-play (and the occasional celebrity imitation).

Starting with the cool opening FMV of Frank Thomas pounding one out the park, **ALL-STAR BASEBALL '97** is the complete package. The Major League Baseball license provides all the teams and stadiums, and the MLBPA provides all the



Moore captured by Frank Thomas

ALL-STAR BASEBALL '97's realism doesn't stop there, though: Stats Inc. does the numbers as the game tracks stats in 27 categories throughout the season. So you can scout other teams' players before you face them, or get the information you need to make that blockbuster trade to put your team over the top. With **ALL-STAR BASEBALL '97's** killer A.I. plus the debut of interleague play, you'll need every advantage you can get your hands on to make it to the Fall Classic. (And, of course, play in the namesake 1997 All-Star Game along the way).

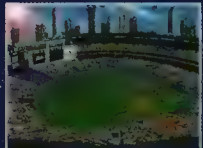
Scheduled for release at the start of the season, Acclaim's **ALL-STAR BASEBALL '97** looks to be as good as holding season tickets to every team in the league -- guaranteed to keep you pitching, hitting, sliding and running from the opening pitch to the game's final out. There will be a ton of baseball games out this spring, but like a true **ALL-STAR** this game outplays them all!



Full season team and player stats



Trade players between teams



All 28 3-D rendered MLB stadiums

TITLE:
**ALL-STAR
BASEBALL
1997**
Featuring
Frank Thomas

CATEGORY:
Sports

PUBLISHER:
Acclaim

AVAILABLE:
April

PLATFORMS:
PlayStation
Sega Saturn

DEVELOPER:
Iguana

% DONE:
70%



EA Sports

College

Football

USA Finals '97

EGM recently got the opportunity to attend EA Sports' Campus Cup College Football USA 97 National Video Game Finals. The tournament was held at Planet Hollywood in New Orleans and pitted eight finalists from four different colleges (two players per school) against each other in heated battle. The game used for the competition was EA Sports' College Football USA 97 for the Sega Genesis.

Last fall, EA Sports conducted a College Football USA 97 tour which scoured some of the top college campuses all across the country in the hopes of finding the best college players of EA Sports' newest Genesis game. The top four teams would then be flown to the video game finals in New Orleans and also attend the FSU/Florida game at the Nokia Sugar Bowl on Jan. 2, 1997.

The top four teams and players were as follows: #1 Nebraska—Jerry Kuhl/Jeff Luhr; #2 Central Florida—James Kuhl/Rich Mewengkang; #3 Cincinnati—Derek Shafer/Brian Truby; #4 West Virginia—Jason Perez/Pat Vicker. The finals would pit #1 Nebraska against #4 West Virginia on one TV screen while #2 Central Florida and #3 Cincinnati would play on the other. The winner of those two games would then go head-to-head for EA's National Championship title. In honor of the Sugar Bowl, each team could only pick the Florida State Seminoles or the Florida Gators (via a coin toss). Each team was also allowed one player per half, while the remaining player would play the second half.



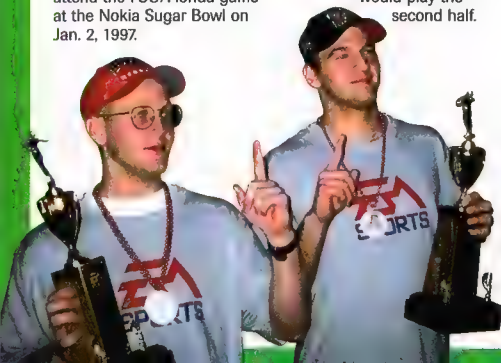
In the first game, Team Nebraska selected the FSU Seminoles and West Virginia picked the Florida Gators. Meanwhile, Central Florida chose the Seminoles and Cincinnati played as the Gators. During this first round, neither game was close. The #1 ranked Nebraska easily defeated West Virginia with a score of 35-14. The other game was even worse. #3 ranked Cincinnati dominated over #2 ranked Central Florida with a score of 72-14.

The championship game matched the #1 Nebraska Cornhuskers against #3 ranked Cincinnati Bearcats. Nebraska chose the FSU Seminoles and Cincinnati played the Florida Gators.

What was so ironic was that the Sugar Bowl itself (which was to be played hours later) was also a championship game pitting a #1 and #3 team against each other (a la Nebraska and Cincinnati). What's even weirder is that the #1 team in the Sugar Bowl was FSU (mirroring Nebraska's selection) and #3 was the Florida Gators (the team Cincinnati was playing).

The winning team of EA Sports' College Football USA 97 Video Game Finals would each be awarded a trophy, a video game system of their choice plus a library of games from EA Sports. That team turned out to be the Nebraska Cornhuskers. The Cincinnati Bearcats kept the game close during the first half, but in the end, Nebraska was just too tough for them to handle. The final score was Nebraska 65-Cincinnati 36.

After the game, the two teams jumped on a bus and headed to the Sugar Bowl. After such an exciting event, it would be interesting to see how EA Sports could possibly top this one.



Sporting Game Reviews

Current Favorites:

Kraig Kujawa *NBA Hang Time* • *NFL GameDay '97*
Dean Hager *Top Pin Alley* • *Rage Racer*

TEST DRIVE: OFF-ROAD • PLAYSTATION • ACCOLADE

Kraig Kujawa

Hordes of mediocre off-road racing titles have been coming out recently, and *Test Drive: Off-Road* is the best of the bunch. Four different vehicles are included, one of which is the famed Hummer. Using real vehicles is novel, although it would have been much better if there were more than four of them. Each track has many obstacles and paths making gameplay varied enough to keep things fresh. If you're looking for a good off-road racing game, this one won't disappoint.



Incorporating speed and realism in an off-road driving simulation seems to be the biggest challenge to the genre so far. Accolade's *Test Drive* succeeds in providing a quick-moving 4x4 race, while keeping the realism just high enough to satisfy most players. The downside is that many of the tracks get repetitive too quickly. In addition, the competition is not quite as tough as I would have liked. Still, if it's name-brand vehicles you want, along with some challenging terrain *Test Drive* can fill the order.

Dean Hager

NBA SHOOT OUT '97 • PLAYSTATION • SCEA

Kraig Kujawa

Add *Shoot Out '97* to the long list of Sony Sports' success stories. This game is incredibly improved over the original, especially in its game speed. No longer sluggish, *Shoot Out '97* is suddenly a very entertaining game. The 3-D graphics not only move realistically, but they look a whole lot better. The new pinpoint "icon passing" system adds a lot to gameplay. *Shoot Out* still lacks a bit in its play calling and strategic features, but overall, it's an outstanding basketball game.



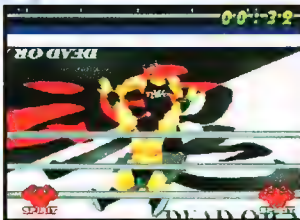
A good game just got a lot better! The action is faster than last year, about 30 percent faster to be exact. If that were not enough, another improvement—"icon passing"—allows you to pass to the player of your choice at any time. Beyond the advancements, the game is still as solid as ever with every team in the NBA at your fingertips, along with almost all the players and their stats. With up to eight-player capabilities, this one is great for team play.

Dean Hager

WCW VS. THE WORLD • PLAYSTATION • T*HQ

Kraig Kujawa

This is probably the best 32-Bit wrestling game on the market, but there really aren't many of them out. *WCW Vs. The World* is a global wrestling hate-fest involving big-name WCW wrestlers thrown in with a bunch of unknown scrubs throughout the world. The impressive 3-D graphics move extremely well, especially considering how many different moves that each wrestler has (some have individual signature moves). If you're a wrestling fan, this is the game to get.



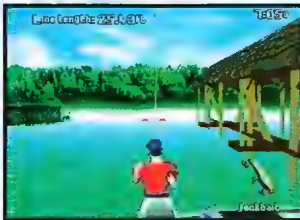
I can't say wrestling is my favorite sport, but I will go out on a limb and say this is the best one I've played for a 32-Bit platform. T*HQ has fortified this game with over 50 name wrestlers from around the globe including, of course, Hulk Hogan. Large 3-D characters are sufficiently mobile in the ring as well as being nifty responsive to most of the button combos and trick moves. A "roving" camera provides a functional view of the action at all times.

Dean Hager

BIG BASS WORLD CHAMP. • PLAYSTATION • HOT-B

Kraig Kujawa

I have to admit, when I found out that I would be reviewing a fishing game, I scoffed. But after playing this game for a while, it's much better than I thought it would be. I'm even man enough to admit that, hey—maybe I enjoyed it. This game won me over by combining a lot of realism along with nice 3-D graphics. You can drive your boat around, look underwater to spy on the fish...all sorts of neat stuff. I actually learned more about fishing than I care to by playing this title.



What can I say...it's fishing! But wait, give it a chance. This one is definitely an acquired taste. While it won't generate rabid gaming excitement, it will draw you in much the same way a good game of chess would. Nice fishy graphics and authentic sound effects help set the anglin' mood. Compete in four successive, realtime tournaments complete with weigh-ins. The goal is to reach the final lake and compete with the rod master himself—Hank Parker.

Dean Hager

Sweepstakes Rules:

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a standard-size postcard containing name, address and phone number to "WCW vs. The World Sweepstakes", 5016 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 100, Calabasas, CA 91302. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten.

Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by May 1, 1997. All entries become exclusive property of T*H*Q, Inc. ("Sponsor") and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsor assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. Only one prize per family, organization or household.

2. Prizes: 1 Grand Prize: Grand Prize winner will attend the E³ event and will receive a trip for two to Atlanta, Georgia, from the nearest gateway city including air transportation for two, ground transportation to/from the hotel, hotel accommodations for two people (one room) for 2 days and 3 nights selected by Sponsor, two meals per day, two passes to the E³ event, and admission to the T*H*QWCW exclusive party at E³. Grand prize has an approximate retail value of \$2,750. 20 First Prizes: First Prize winners will receive one (1) WCW T-shirt and one (1) WCW hat. First Prize has an approximate retail value of \$35. Winners will be determined by a random drawing from all valid entries by Sponsor whose decisions are final. Drawing to be held on or about May 15, 1997. All prizes will be awarded. All other prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor should the featured prize(s) become unavailable.

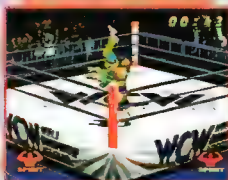
3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received.

4. Eligibility: Sweepstakes open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Rhode Island and Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. If a minor wins the travel prize, winner must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian on said travel. Winners and travel companions shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 30 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners acknowledge prize does not include all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor and their agents, representatives and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes.

5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "WCW vs. The World Sweepstakes", 5016 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 100, Calabasas, CA 91302. Requests for winners lists must be received by May 30, 1997. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list.

6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

7. Sponsors: This Sweepstakes is solely sponsored by T*H*Q, Inc. (1997 T*H*Q, Inc./Amik Corporation). (1997 World Championship Wrestling. All rights reserved. Hulk Hogan, Hulkamania and Hulkster are trademarks of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. licensed to World Championship Wrestling, Inc. legal/contest/rules/970501 WCW03



ENTER THE WCW VS THE WORLD SWEEPSTAKES!



GRAND PRIZE

1

One Grand Prize Winner will attend the E³ event and receive a trip for two to Atlanta, Ga., including airfare and hotel accommodations. The winner will also attend the exclusive T*H*Q/WCW wrestling event and party.

FIRST PRIZES

20

Twenty First Prize winners will receive a WCW T-shirt and a WCW hat.



TO ENTER:

Send a postcard with your name, age, address and telephone number to:

WCW vs. The World
c/o T*H*Q
5016 North Parkway Calabasas, Suite 100
Calabasas, California 91302

All entries must be received by May 1, 1997

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Interface gives you the chance to praise, gripe, ask, speculate or simply reflect. *EGM* will discuss some of today's top issues in the video game industry. You can reach *EGM* by writing to:

Interface, Letters to the Editor
1920 Highland Avenue, #222
Lombard, IL 60148

or, you can send e-mail to:

EGM-Mail@ed.com

EGM will award a prize to the writer of the best letter of each month. Please note: The above two addresses are for editorial correspondence only! Direct any subscription inquiries to:

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Boulder, CO 80322-5722

Note: *EGM* cannot and will not personally respond to any letters. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and grammar purposes.

SETTING THINGS RIGHT

Dear *EGM*,
Although I loved your section on retroactive gaming, there are some inaccuracies in the February issue that I would like to point out. Page 97—The Atari 7800 was not the reason why the Atari 5200 didn't succeed. The 5200 didn't succeed because it wasn't compatible with the Atari 2600, and it had lousy controllers. The 7800 wasn't released until two years after the death of the 5200. Page 98—The original Odyssey did not use screen overlays to change games. Games were changed by inserting different circuit boards (the forerunner to modern cartridges). The system used screen overlays because it couldn't generate graphics. Page 100—The reason Mattel released the Intellivision II had nothing to do with popularity. The new system was simply cheaper to make than the original. Practically every other company (Atari 2600 Jr., Sega Master System 2, NES 2) did the same thing.

Leonard Herman
author, *Phoenix: The Fall & Rise of Videogames*

GAMES FOR RENT

Dear *EGM*,
A problem that has bothered me for some time now is the fact that most video game rental stores have about 50 more games for the PlayStation than the Saturn. In one store, the latest Saturn release they had was Iron Storm (that came out last summer, and they haven't had any new games since then). Of course, the PS has a new game to rent every week. My point is that since we gamers can't afford to shell out the money to buy every new game, we have to rent them first. But how can we rent games that aren't there?

666post@concentric.net

If you are not satisfied with a situation, then you should clue these rental outlets in to your wants and needs. If enough of their customers complain, they might start buying more Saturn games to rent out.

Otherwise, take your business to someone who offers you what you want.

X-MEN VS. SF TO HIT THE PLAYSTATION TOO

Dear *EGM*,
I really want to know if there's any chance that X-Men vs. Street Fighter is going to come out for the PlayStation (I know that it's coming out for the Saturn)?

AustinKwok@aol.com

Capcom is planning on releasing both the Saturn and the PlayStation versions in the third quarter of '97. They are striving for perfect translations so that what happened with SF Alpha 2 (the Saturn version was all-around better) won't happen again.



The Internet rumors are false. X-Men vs. Street Fighter is coming to the Saturn.

E-MAILERS BE WARNED

Dear *EGM*,
I submitted a letter to your magazine a while ago, and by the grace of (submit your deity here), it was printed. However, my e-mail address was also printed along with the letter. While it was simply a question about video gaming, I was subjected to several nonsense letters for a good while. My point of submitting another letter is just to let people know what could happen if you include your e-mail address with a letter to a magazine. I don't want to discourage anyone from having it printed,

but most people don't even think about the consequences of having your e-mail address known to thousands of not-quite-right-in-the-head people.

Anonymous
e-mail address withheld by request

Great advice. Everybody: if you don't want your e-mail address (or city and state) printed, please tell us so in your letter!

WHAT DO YOU PAY FOR 200 BUCKS?

Dear *EGM*,
I would like to respond to a letter you printed [January *EGM*, #90] discussing console prices. The person tried to make a compelling argument about the price of next-generation systems by bringing to our attention that the Atari 2600 originally cost \$200. I must admit, that was a great reminder, but then I realized he forgot an

Things Only a FOOL Would Wait For

- A Street Fighter/Mortal Kombat crossover.
- One universal system that plays every game.
- A new arcade game that takes only one quarter.
- Nintendo to stop bringing out 64-Bit updated versions of past hits.
- Sega to stop making new game systems or add-ons.
- Sony to realize that 2-D games can be fun.
- Square Soft, Nintendo or Working Designs to make a really, really bad game.
- A new 3DO or Jaguar game.
- Virtual Boy 64.

ENTER FRAGE

memory cartridge, but then I would have to pull the modem out and insert the memory cart and back in again! Besides, Sega stopped making their memory cart, which was a mistake I think. Listen Sega, we need more memory! We Net Linkers can't go on like this forever.

plajalal@concentric.net

Sorry, your only solution for the moment is to buy a memory cartridge and swap it with the Net Link back and forth. You should save your games to the cart and use the little bit of your internal memory for your Net Link's information. By the way, Sega is still making and selling their memory cartridges, though you are not the only one to have trouble finding them (we've been buying third-party memory cartridges for our personal use because the Sega carts are impossible to find around here). You can order them direct from Sega by calling 1-888-SegaSales.

P.S. ABBREV

Dear EGM,
I own a PlayStation, and they have some really weird abbreviations. For instance, PSX, URNOTE, ENOS, etc. If you know what these mean, could you tell me and the many other confused people?

Sylvanian7@aol.com

Most people at Sony Computer Entertainment America today do not even know what PSX stands for. Steve Race, former president of SCEA (now CEO of Spectrum HoloByte), told us that it stood

for PlayStation Xperimental. It was an internal code name used for the PlayStation project before it became a reality. URNOTE is SCEA's advertising slogan for "You Are Not Ready (Red E)." Finally, ENOS translates into "Ready (Red E) Ninth of September," the ninth of September, 1995 being the release date of the PS. Many people will go on for the next few generations arguing about what ENOS means, but this should clear it up, right?

STREET FIGHTER VS. MORTAL KOMBAT? NAH.

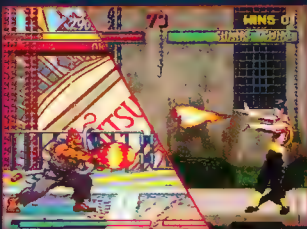
Dear EGM,

I have realized that fighting games are, to an extent, the most popular type of games around. I was pondering an idea and wondering if Midway (the creators of Mortal Kombat) and Capcom (the creators of Street Fighter) would ever decide to join forces and create a 2-D fighting game that would feature both MK and SF characters?

Fred Kanter, Jr.
Glendale, AZ

Uh...we hope you didn't see our sidebar about fools earlier in this section. The idea isn't bad. Representatives from both Midway and Capcom told us that they would like to see it happen, but it won't. Both companies agreed that licensing concerns would be the biggest factor preventing such a crossover. Ego would be another problem. How will two completely different development teams agree on a set animation style and game engine? The fighting styles of Street Fighter and Mortal

Kombat games are completely different. Don't forget, SF is designed by Japanese programmers, and MK is a product of American developers. Finally, neither company will want to make available to the other their proprietary source codes, which would need to happen for such a project.



SF vs. MK. Sorry, it's not going to happen.

SHHH...DON'T TALK!

Dear EGM,

I found an error in your February issue. In the Review Crew, Donkey Kong Country 3 is listed as a PlayStation game. Send me some free stuff to shut me up, so I don't tell your competition of your ignorance!

John Reilly
Comrack, NY

Please don't tell We're trying to keep our ignorance under wraps. For your cooperation, we'll send you a "Special" PlayStation Edition of DKCs. Of course, we're just kidding...you aren't getting jack.

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Sammie Hui • Malaysia

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Congratulations, Mr. Hui. Your prize is as easy as way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments!



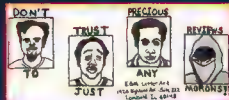
Ricki Menge
Brawley, CA



Sanli Wang
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Just trust them to these morons!

The ASCII Control Pad

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The background of the advertisement is a dark, industrial-themed setting. It features a wooden structure with ropes hanging from it. Three video game controllers are suspended by ropes from a horizontal beam at the top. The controllers are white and black, and they are hanging in a way that suggests they are being tested or are part of a game. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a moody atmosphere.

AT THE END OF YOUR ROPE?

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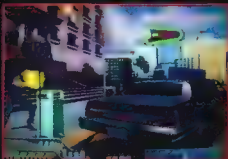
EGM²

Tips, Tricks and Strategies for Home and Arcade

April 1997

Usually the months after Christmas start the decline of the number and—sometimes—the quality of games. However, this year the games just keep coming, and we're here to blow them out!

From incredible computer ports like MechWarrior 2 to newcomers like Tiger Shark, there are plenty of surprises,



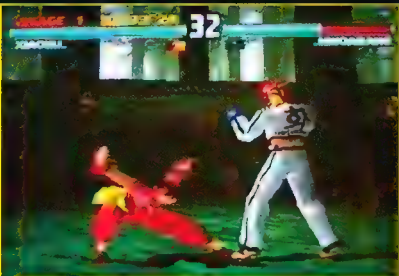
The arcades are heating up with brand-new shockers and racers.

including other styles of games such as RPG and adventure titles like Vandal Hearts, Lunacy and Broken Helix.

The fighting game craze heats up once again with the ultimate sequel war: Tekken 3 vs. Street Fighter III. If this wasn't enough, there are several other participants in the ring, namely Mace, Bio Freaks and Street Fighter EX.

Also, be sure to check out exclusive arcade coverage on some of the hottest titles like Sega's racing game Scud, Atari's Area 51 sequel Maximum Force (pictured above), as well as a few pinball surprises.

Feature Story



The fighting genre gears up with big-name contenders. Look for third-timers like Tekken 3 and Street Fighter III to be met by some unexpected challengers such as Mace and Street Fighter EX.



Doom started out as a computer craze. It soon swept its way to console land. How will it do on the N64? We'll show you!

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

May 1997

FEATURE STORY



While Final Fantasy VII is out in Japan, why will it take six months before there is a U.S. version? Watch for an answer in next month's EGM.



Now that Sushi-X broke the world's first information on MK4, he has vowed to get us a monthly update.

Now that Final Fantasy VII is out in Japan, the word is we will have to wait up to six months before we get to play the U.S. version. EGM wants to know why, and we are going to the source. Watch for our behind-the-scenes report.

Once Sushi-X discovered the first real information on Mortal Kombat IV, he grudgingly set aside Street Fighter III and Tekken 3 to stay camped out on Midway's doorstep. Don't miss our exclusive monthly update.

Also, our editors have been hitting all the developers in



It's trade show time again and the EGM editors are off to Japan to get the latest game info right from the source!

the U.S. Watch for even more behind-the-scenes info and game screens on software that the competition hasn't even heard of yet! As usual, if a game is being worked on, you'll see it first in EGM.

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FINAL FANTASY 7

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- Blast Wing
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- Shining in the Darkness
- Airs Adventure
- Terra Phantasia
- Lunar Silver Star
- Drift King 97
- Z Gundam
- Grande
- Fire Pro Wrestling
- Langrisser 3
- Sakura Wars
- Samurai Shodown
- Sengoku Blade

U.S.

- Fighter's Edge
- Albert O'Connell
- Quake
- Kumite: Fighter's Edge
- Die Hard Arcade
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COL8001
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Dev: M. Eyer: Blue
DOB: 12/17/86
MEGA MAN

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- ☐ place car in park
- ☒ check weapons & load ammo

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